



CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL
WELCOMES YOU TO A REGULAR
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
March 20, 2018

The City of Signal Hill appreciates your attendance. Citizen interest provides the Planning Commission with valuable information regarding issues of the community. Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

Meetings commence at 7:00 p.m. There is a public comment period at the beginning of the regular meeting, as well as the opportunity to comment on each agenda item as it arises. Any meeting may be adjourned to a time and place stated in the order of adjournment.

The agenda is posted 72 hours prior to each meeting on the City's website and outside of City Hall and is available at each meeting. The agenda and related reports are available for review online and at the Community Development office and the Signal Hill Community Center on the Friday afternoon prior to the Commission meeting. Agenda and staff reports are also available at our website at www.cityofsignalhill.org.

During the meeting, the Community Development Director presents agenda items for Commission consideration. The public is allowed to address the Commission on all agenda items. The Chair may take agenda items out of order and will announce when the period for public comment is open on each agenda item. The public may speak to the Commission on items that are not listed on the agenda. This public comment period will be held at the beginning of the public portion of the meeting. You are encouraged (but not required) to complete a speaker card prior to the item being considered, and give the card to a City staff member. The purpose of the card is to ensure speakers are correctly identified in the minutes. However, completion of a speaker card is voluntary, and is not a requirement to address the Commission. The cards are provided at the rear of the Council Chamber. Please direct your comments or questions to the Chair.

Planning Commission Members are compensated \$125.00 per meeting.

(1) CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 P.M.

(2) ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONER BROOKS
COMMISSIONER FALLON
COMMISSIONER WILSON
VICE CHAIR PARKER
CHAIR RICHÁRD

(3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(4) PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR ON ITEMS NOT LISTED ON THIS AGENDA

(5) DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

a. Follow-Up to the 2018 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Summary: Staff will present a brief report about the Homeless Count event, and extend thanks to the volunteers, the Police, and the Planning Commission, for providing assistance.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

b. Beautification Award Program

Summary: Staff will give an update on the Beautification Award program nominations.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

c. New Housing Related Legislation: Senate Bill 35 – Streamlined Housing Approval Process

Summary: On September 29, 2017, the Governor of California signed a robust package of housing related legislation aimed at addressing the State's unprecedented affordability crisis. In a series of Director's Reports focusing on housing issues, staff will highlight key provisions of the new laws. This Director's Report will focus on Senate Bill 35, which is meant to create a more streamlined approval process for housing projects, especially those with affordable units.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

(6) CONSENT CALENDAR

The following Consent Calendar items are expected to be routine and non-controversial. Items will be acted upon by the Commission at one time without discussion. Any item may be removed by a Commissioner or member of the audience for discussion.

a. Minutes of the Following Meeting

Regular Meeting of February 20, 2018.

Recommendation: Approve.

b. City Council Follow-up

Summary: Below for your review is a brief summary of the City Council's actions from the last City Council meeting(s).

Recommendation: Receive and file.

c. Development Status Report

Summary: Attached for your review is the monthly Development Status Report which highlights current projects.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

d. In the News

Summary: Attached for review are articles compiled by staff that may be of interest to the Commission.

Recommendation: Receive and file.

(7) COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS

COMMISSIONER BROOKS
COMMISSIONER FALLON
COMMISSIONER WILSON
VICE CHAIR PARKER
CHAIR RICHÁRD

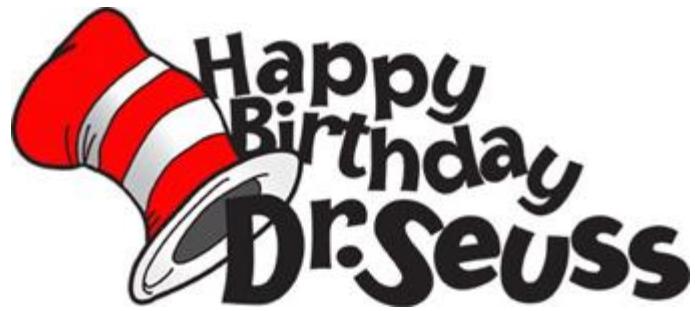
(8) ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn tonight's meeting to the next regular meeting to be held Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at City Hall.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

If you need special assistance beyond what is normally provided to participate in City meetings, the City will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please call the City Clerk's office at (562) 989-7305 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible.

March
5a.





CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

March 20, 2018

AGENDA ITEM

TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: COLLEEN DOAN
SENIOR PLANNER

SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S REPORT – FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2018 GREATER LOS ANGELES HOMELESS COUNT

Summary:

Staff will present a brief report about the Homeless Count event, and extend thanks to the volunteers, the Police, and the Planning Commission, for providing assistance.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

Background and Analysis:

Since 2013, the City has participated in five Point-In-Time, Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count events sponsored by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). The event is hosted by the City's Community Development Department, with driving assistance from the City Police Department. Starting in 2015, with assistance from the Veteran's Administration, LAHSA began to conduct the 3-day regional count every year, rather than every other year.

On January 24, 2018, the City participated in its fifth Homeless Count event. LAHSA volunteers conducted multiple homeless counts countywide, such as a targeted Youth Count, a Shelter Count, and a demographic survey. The data gathered from all of these efforts helps give an accurate picture of homeless people in the region and provides the foundation to allocate resources where they will have the greatest impact.

Homeless Count Follow-Up

March 20, 2018

Page 2

The Community Development Department hosted the 2018 Signal Hill event, providing coordination, training, refreshments and volunteer recruitment. Signal Hill Police Officers Don Moreau, Delia Martinez, Ian Bridges, and Taylor Byrd, served as drivers for four mobile teams. The 3-hour event included orientation, training, and a mobile survey of every street, alley, commercial parking lot and parks in the City.

The following homeless data was reported:

- 6 cars
- 4 vans
- 4 campers/RVs
- 4 adult individuals
- 5 makeshift shelters
- 0 tents

The tally was very similar to the previous year's data. The data from the evening was entered into the LAHSA online data software the night of the event, and tally sheets and materials were picked up by LAHSA staff the next day. This point-in time data will be combined with all of the count data from the multiple other counts and LAHSA will release official homeless numbers for each participating municipality later this year.

In addition to thanking all of the community volunteers who participated, staff acknowledges our Police Department for providing drivers and vehicles, and our Planning Commission for providing needed standby and back-up assistance.

Approved by:

Scott Charney

March
5b.





CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

March 20, 2018

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: PHYLLIS THORNE
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S REPORT – BEAUTIFICATION AWARD PROGRAM

Summary:

Staff will give an update on the Beautification Award program nominations.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

Background and Analysis:

January marked the start of the award year for 2018. Staff has actively solicited Beautification Award nominations from Commissioners. To date, no nominations have been received.

Once staff receives a nomination, the property will be included in a staff report that gives a reason for the nomination, and includes photographs and other details.

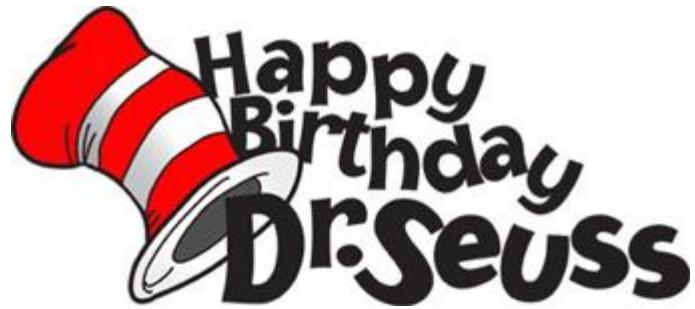
The next round of solicitations is scheduled for June 2018.

Approved:

Scott Charney
Director of Community Development

March

5c.





CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

March 20, 2018

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: RYAN AGBAYANI
ASSISTANT PLANNER**

**SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S REPORT – NEW HOUSING RELATED LEGISLATION:
SENATE BILL 35 – STREAMLINED HOUSING APPROVAL PROCESS**

Summary:

On September 29, 2017, the Governor of California signed a robust package of housing related legislation aimed at addressing the State's unprecedented affordability crisis. In a series of Director's Reports focusing on housing issues, staff will highlight key provisions of the new laws. This Director's Report will focus on Senate Bill 35, which is meant to create a more streamlined approval process for housing projects, especially those with affordable units.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

Background and Analysis:

The League of California Cities is an association of cities which represent the majority of the state. Recently, the League released a publication titled "A 2018 Guide to New Housing Law in California" (Attachment A). According to the report, housing affordability is an urgent issue in California, where a majority of renters (over 3 million households) pay more than 30 percent of their income toward rent and nearly one-third (over 1.5 million households) spend more than 50 percent of their income on rent. In addition, California's homeownership rates are at their lowest point since the 1940s. This has led many experts in the field to declare a crisis in the current state of housing supply and affordability.

Signed by Governor Jerry Brown in 2017, the new California “housing package” consists of 15 bills. These bills fall into three main categories:

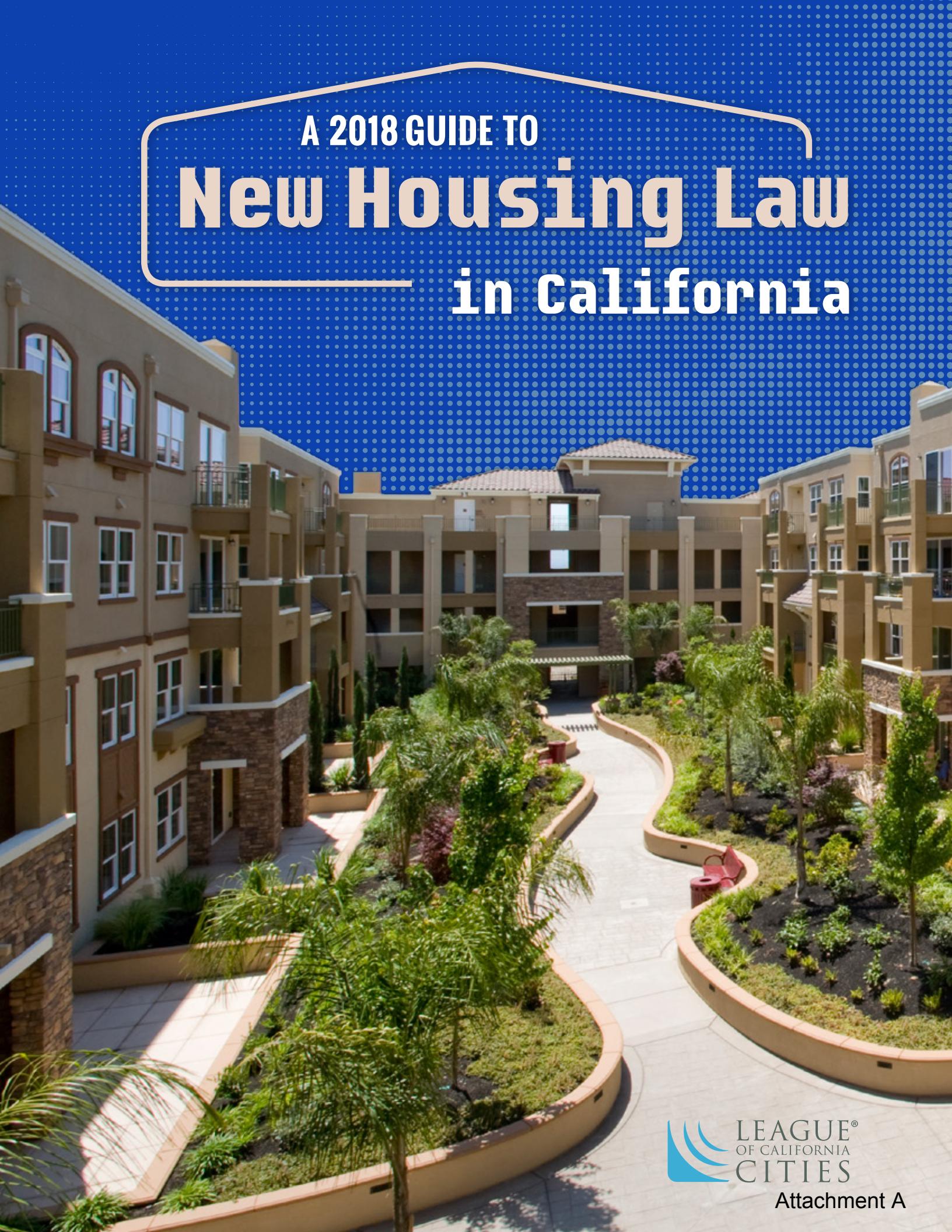
1. Funding
2. Streamlining
3. Local accountability

Senate Bill 35 (SB 35) falls within the second category of *streamlining*.

On November 9, 2017, staff attended a League of Cities meeting at which they received an overview presentation regarding the new housing laws. A section of the presentation was solely dedicated to SB 35 (Attachment B). As part of the Housing Element of the General Plan, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation is a state-mandated process that sets the number of housing units that must be included, at all affordability levels. Under SB 35, if a city is not on track to meet those goals, then approval of projects will be streamlined if they met a set of objective criteria, including affordability, density, zoning, historic, and environmental standards, and if they pay prevailing wage for construction labor.

Approved:

Scott Charney
Director of Community Development Department



A 2018 GUIDE TO

New Housing Law

in California

INTRODUCTION

Housing affordability is an urgent issue in California, where a majority of renters (over 3 million households) pay more than 30 percent of their income toward rent and nearly one-third (over 1.5 million households) spend more than 50 percent of their income on rent. In addition, California's homeownership rates are at the lowest point since the 1940s. This has led many experts in the field to declare the current state of housing supply and affordability a crisis.

In his January 2017 budget proposal, Governor Brown set the tone and parameters for substantive action to address housing supply and affordability issues. He indicated that new and increased funding for housing must be instituted along with regulatory reform that streamlines local project approval processes and imposes more stringent measures of local accountability. These parameters guided legislative action throughout 2017, resulting in a package of bills signed into law.

Gov. Brown and state legislators made significant changes to local land-use processes and approved new sources of revenue for housing construction. Throughout the 2017 legislative session, the League advocated for proposals that preserved local authority while advancing much-needed housing development approvals.

This reference guide covers recent actions taken by the state Legislature to address the housing crisis and provides in-depth analysis and guidance on changes made to state and local land-use law that will affect city processes and functions related to housing development.

PART I. THE CALIFORNIA HOUSING CRISIS

Principal Causes of the Affordable Housing Shortage

Local governments are just one piece of the complex scenario that comprises the housing development process. Cities don't build homes — the private sector does. California's local governments must zone enough land in their General Plans to meet the state's projected housing need; however, cities don't control local market realities or the availability of state and federal funding needed to support the development of affordable housing. This is true not just in California but nationwide.

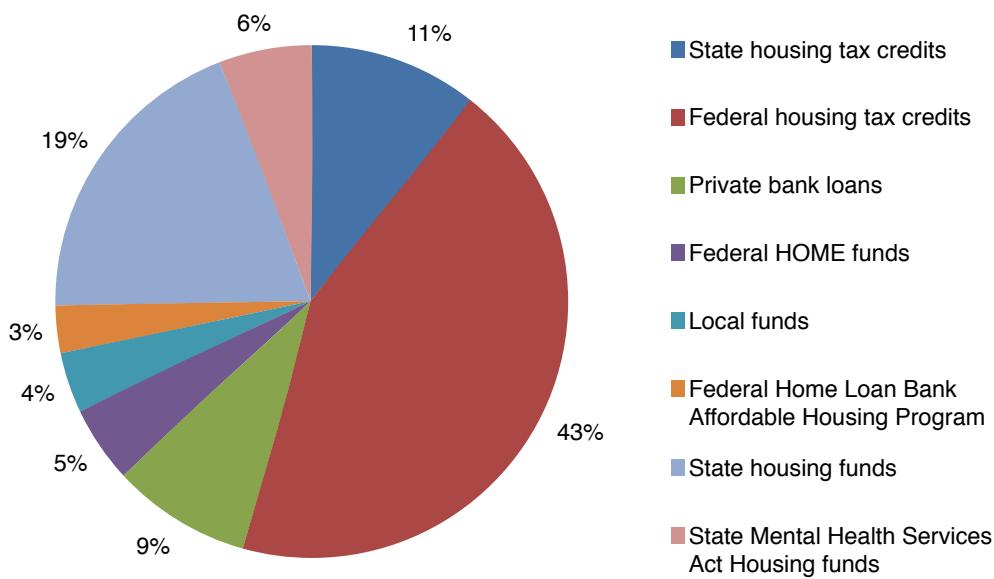
Significant barriers and disincentives constrain the production of affordable housing. These include:

- Lack of funding and subsidies needed to support housing that low- and moderate-income families can afford;
- Local and national economic and job market conditions; and
- Challenges for developers.

Lack of Funding and Subsidies for Affordable Housing

In addition to private sector financing, funding and subsidies to support the development of affordable housing come from two primary sources: federal and state government housing programs.

Sample Funding Mixes for Affordable Multifamily Developments



Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development,
California's Housing Future: Challenges and Opportunities

It's extremely rare for a single affordable housing program to provide enough funding to finance an entire development, due to the costs of development and funding constraints and criteria that encourage developers to leverage other funds. The developer will typically apply for funding from multiple programs and private sector lenders that have overlapping policy goals and requirements. Private-sector lenders may also have additional criteria. The process of applying for and securing funding from multiple sources can add significantly to the lead time needed to start construction.

One multifamily development can easily need five to 10 funding sources to finance its construction. Developers generally layer financing from state and federal tax credits, state housing programs, local land donation and other local grants, federal housing programs and private loans from financial institutions. The chart "Sample Funding Mixes for Affordable Multifamily Developments" (below, left) offers an example of funding mixes for affordable multifamily developments.

Federal funding for affordable housing comprises a significant portion of California's resources to support affordable housing. However, due to pressures to cut federal spending and reduce the deficit, federal funding for housing has declined in recent years despite the increase in the number of severely cost-burdened, low-income renter households (which rose from 1.2 million in 2007 to 1.7 million in 2014). Between 2003 and 2015, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funds allocated to California by the U.S. Department of Housing and

Urban Development (HUD) to produce affordable housing units have declined by 51 percent and 66 percent respectively (see "HUD Program Allocations to California 2003–2015" below).

Furthermore, few sources of affordable housing funding are stable or growing from year to year despite an increasing population and demand for housing. This funding uncertainty deters both efforts to address housing challenges in a sustained manner and developers' ability to build affordable housing.

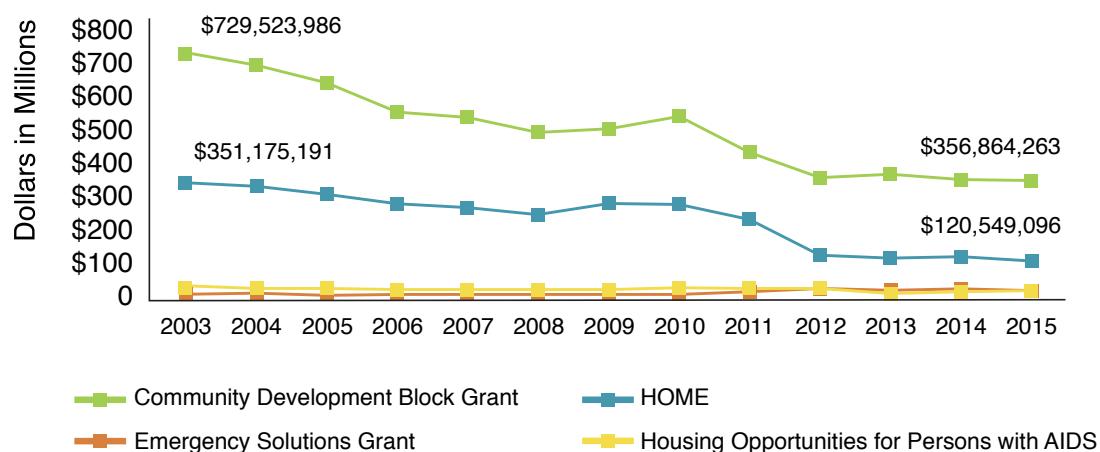
The elimination of redevelopment agencies in California and the subsequent loss of over \$5 billion in funding since 2011 compounded the state's affordable housing challenges. The state has never had a significant permanent source of affordable housing funding, and proceeds from the 2006 housing bond that helped create and preserve affordable apartments, urban infill infrastructure and single-family homes have been expended.

Local and National Economic and Job Market Conditions

Numerous factors contribute to local and national market conditions that affect the availability of affordable housing. The economic recovery from the Great Recession, when many middle-income families lost their homes to foreclosures, has occurred at different rates in communities throughout California. Areas with high-tech industry and some coastal areas recovered more rapidly than other regions.

continued

HUD Program Allocations to California 2003–2015 (Adjusted for Inflation)



Source: *HUD Formula Program Allocations by State: 2003–2015* and *California Department of Housing and Community Development, California's Housing Future: Challenges and Opportunities*

Overall, the recovery has been uneven. Jobs in manufacturing and blue-collar industries have not fully rebounded, and jobs in the expanding service sector pay lower wages. Many households are still struggling to recover from the recession and home foreclosure crisis, and many recent college graduates are carrying significant debt — reducing their ability to purchase a home or pay rent.

Mortgage underwriting standards became more stringent in the aftermath of the foreclosure crisis, which can make it more difficult for potential homebuyers to qualify for the needed financing.

Some of the state's major homebuilders went out of business during the recession, leaving fewer companies to meet the demand for housing. Production of housing fell dramatically during the recession, which contributed significantly to a shortage of homes across the affordability spectrum. As the chart "Annual Production of Housing Units 2000–2015" (below) shows, housing "starts" statewide are at about half of pre-recession levels and fall far short of the state's projected need for 180,000 new homes per year.

Housing values also reflect the uneven recovery happening throughout the state. *The Wall Street Journal* recently compared home prices today to those of 2004. In San Jose, which is part of Silicon Valley where tech jobs pay top wages, prices are 54 percent higher than 2004 levels, but this is not so in areas hindered by a slower recovery from the recession. In Central Valley cities such as Stockton and Merced, housing prices are 21 and 16 percent lower respectively.

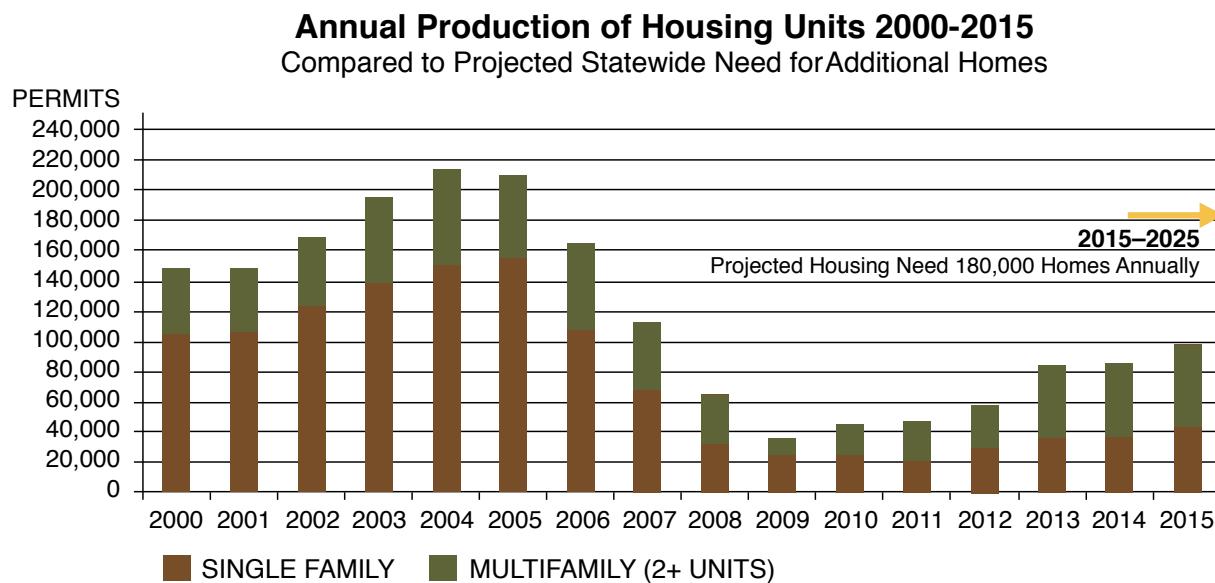
Challenges for Developers

In addition to funding challenges to develop affordable housing, other challenges further exacerbate the obstacles to development, including:

- Identifying an adequate supply of water;
- Complying with state regulations and energy standards, greenhouse gas reduction requirements and other environmental conditions;
- Competing with other developers to build high-end, more expensive housing;
- Infrastructure deficits;
- Market conditions, such as those described earlier; and
- The cost of land and construction.

Other Factors

In addition — but to a far lesser degree — factors at the local level can also impact the development of affordable housing. In some cities, new development requires voter approval. Community concerns about growth, density and preserving the character of an area may affect local development. Public hearings and other processing requirements add time to the approval timeline. Project opponents can use the environmental permitting process and litigation to limit or stop a project. However, the process of complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) also serves to protect communities by ensuring that important environmental issues are identified and addressed.



Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development, California's Housing Future: Challenges and Opportunities

PART II. LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE: UNDERSTANDING THE CHANGES TO HOUSING AND LAND-USE LAWS

In an attempt to address some of the barriers to housing construction at the state and local level, lawmakers introduced more than 130 bills during the 2017 legislative session; many focused on constraining local land-use authority or eliminating local discretion. After months of negotiations and public hearings, 15 bills made it into the “housing package” and were signed by Gov. Brown. These bills fall into three main categories: funding, streamlining and local accountability. This section describes the most notable changes made to the state housing laws and identifies items or actions a city may want to consider in moving forward.

Funding Measures

The Legislature passed and Gov. Brown signed into law two key funding measures. The first, SB 2 (Atkins), imposes a new real estate recording fee to fund important affordable housing-related activities on a permanent, ongoing basis, effective Sept. 29, 2017. The second, SB 3 (Beall), places a \$4 billion general obligation bond to fund housing on the November 2018 ballot and requires voter approval; if approved, funds likely will not be available until 2019.

SB 2 (Atkins, Chapter 364, Statutes of 2017) Building Homes and Jobs Act is projected to generate hundreds of millions of dollars annually for affordable housing, supportive housing, emergency shelters, transitional housing and other housing needs via a \$75 to \$225 recording fee on specified real estate documents.

In 2018, 50 percent of the funds collected are earmarked for local governments to update or create General Plans, Community Plans, Specific Plans, sustainable communities strategies and local coastal programs. Funds may also be used to conduct new environmental analyses that improve or expedite local permitting processes. The remaining 50 percent of the funds are allocated to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to assist individuals experiencing or in danger of experiencing homelessness.

Beginning in 2019 and for subsequent years, 70 percent of the proceeds are allocated to local governments through the federal CDBG formula, so that the funds may be used to address housing needs at the local level. HCD will allocate the remaining 30 percent as follows: 5 percent for state incentive programs; 10 percent for farmworker housing; and 15 percent for the California Housing Finance Agency to create mixed-income multifamily residential housing for lower- to moderate-income households.

In consultation with stakeholders, HCD will adopt guidelines to implement SB 2 and determine methodologies to distribute funding allocations.

SB 3 (Beall, Chapter 365, Statutes of 2017) Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond Act of 2018 places a \$4 billion general obligation bond on the November 2018 ballot to fund affordable housing programs and the veterans homeownership program (CalVet). If approved by voters, SB 3 would fund the following existing programs:

- Multifamily Housing Program — \$1.5 billion, administered by HCD, to assist the new construction, rehabilitation and preservation of permanent and transitional rental housing for lower-income households through loans to local public entities and nonprofit and for-profit developers;
- Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Program — \$150 million, administered by HCD, to provide low-interest loans for higher-density rental housing developments close to transit stations that include affordable units and as mortgage assistance for homeownership. Grants are also available to cities, counties and transit agencies for infrastructure improvements necessary for the development;
- Infill Incentive Grant Program — \$300 million, administered by HCD, to promote infill housing developments by providing financial assistance for infill infrastructure that serves new construction and rehabilitates existing infrastructure to support greater housing density;
- Joe Serna, Jr. Farmworker Housing Grant Fund — \$300 million, administered by HCD, to help finance the new construction, rehabilitation and acquisition of owner-occupied and rental housing units for agricultural workers;
- Local Housing Trust Fund Matching Grant Program — \$300 million, administered by HCD, to help finance affordable housing by providing matching grants, dollar for dollar, to local housing trusts;
- CalHome Program — \$300 million, administered by HCD, to help low- and very low- income households become or remain homeowners by providing grants to local public agencies and nonprofit developers to assist individual first-time homebuyers. It also provides direct loan forgiveness for development projects that include multiple ownership units and provides loans for property acquisition for mutual housing and cooperative developments;
- Self-Help Housing Fund — \$150 million, administered by HCD. This program assists low- and moderate-income families with grants to build their homes with their own labor; and
- CalVet Home Loan Program — \$1 billion, administered by the California Department of Veterans Affairs, provides loans to eligible veterans at below-market interest rates with few or no down payment requirements.

continued

Streamlining Measures

Gov. Brown made it very clear in the FY 2017–18 annual budget that he would not sign any housing funding bills without also expediting and streamlining the local housing permitting process. Lawmakers were eager to introduce measures to meet his demand. SB 35 (Wiener), SB 540 (Roth) and AB 73 (Chiu) take three different approaches to streamlining the housing approval process.

SB 35 (Wiener, Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017) streamlines multifamily housing project approvals, at the request of a developer, in a city that fails to issue building permits for its share of the regional housing need by income category. In a SB 35 city, approval of a qualifying housing development on qualifying site is a ministerial act, without CEQA review or public hearings.

Which Cities Must Streamline Housing Approvals Under SB 35?

Cities that meet the following criteria must approve qualifying multifamily housing projects that are consistent with objective planning and design review standards:

- The city fails to submit an annual housing element report for two consecutive years prior to the date when a development application is submitted; or
- HCD determines that the city issued fewer building permits than the locality's share of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) in each of the four income categories for that reporting period (the first four years or last four years of the eight-year housing element cycle).

Once eligibility has been determined, the development must be located on a site that:

- Is within a city that includes some portion of either an urbanized area (population 50,000 or more) or urban cluster (population at least 2,500 and less than 50,000);
- Has at least 75 percent of the perimeter adjoining parcels that are developed with urban uses; and
- Is zoned for residential use or residential mixed-use development or has a General Plan designation that allows residential use or a mix of residential and nonresidential uses, with at least two-thirds of the square footage of the development designated for residential use.

As set forth in the measure, “objective standards” involve “no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official.”

After determining that the locality is subject to streamlining, development sites are excluded if they are located in any of the following areas:

- Coastal zone;
- Prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance;
- Wetlands;
- Very high or high fire hazard severity zone;
- Delineated earthquake fault zone, unless the development complies with applicable seismic protection building code standards;
- Hazardous waste site, unless the state Department of Toxic Substances Control has cleared the site for residential use or residential mixed uses;
- Floodplain or floodway, unless the development has been issued a floodplain development permit or received a no-rise certification; and
- Lands under conservation easement.

In addition, development sites are excluded if they would demolish:

- A historic structure;
- Any housing occupied by tenants in the past 10 years; or
- Housing that is subject to rent or price control.

To be eligible for streamlining, the housing development must:

- Be on a qualifying site;
- Abide by certain inclusionary requirements (10 percent must be affordable to households earning 80 percent or less of area median income or 50 percent must be affordable to households earning 80 percent or less of area median income, depending upon the city's past approval of above-moderate income and lower-income housing, respectively); and
- Pay prevailing wages and use a “skilled and trained workforce.”

Ministerial Approval

If a city determines that development is in conflict with “objective planning standards,” then it must provide written documentation within 60 days of submittal if the development contains 150 or fewer housing units and within 90 days of submittal if the development contains more than 150 housing units.

Approvals must be completed within 90 to 180 days (depending on the number of units in housing development), must be ministerial and not subject to CEQA.

No parking requirements can be imposed on an SB 35 housing development project if it is located:

- Within a half-mile of public transit;
- Within an architecturally and historically significant historic district;
- In an area where on-street parking permits are required but not offered to the occupants of the development; or
- Where there is a car-share vehicle located within one block of the development.

One parking space per unit can be required of all other SB 35 projects.

How Long Does the Approval Last?

The approval does not expire if the project includes public investment in housing affordability beyond tax credits where 50 percent of units are affordable to households earning less than 80 percent of area median income (AMI).

If the project does not include 50 percent of units affordable to households earning less than 80 percent of AMI, approval automatically expires in three years except for a one-year extension if significant progress has been made in preparing the development for construction (such as filing a building permit application).

All approvals remain valid for three years and as long as vertical construction has begun and is in progress.

Opportunities and Considerations

Even though SB 35 makes significant changes to existing law, it is important to consider the following:

- All proposed projects seeking streamlining must be consistent with a jurisdiction's objective zoning standards and objective design review standards. If these standards are outdated or in need of revisions, there is opportunity to do so;
- If a jurisdiction does not have "objective zoning standards and objective design review standards," it may want to create them given that discretionary review is prohibited; and
- Funding assistance will be available in mid- to late 2019 under SB 2 (Atkins, Chapter 364, Statutes of 2017) for updating planning documents, including General Plans, Community Plans, Specific Plans, sustainable communities strategies and local coastal programs. HCD is currently establishing funding guidelines.

SB 540 (Roth, Chapter 369, Statutes of 2017) streamlines the housing approval process by allowing jurisdictions to establish Workforce Housing Opportunity Zones (WHOZs), which focus on workforce and affordable housing in areas close to jobs and



transit and conform to California's greenhouse gas reduction laws. SB 540's objective is to set the stage for approval of housing developments by conducting all of the necessary planning, environmental review and public input on the front end through the adoption of a detailed Specific Plan. SB 540 provides the development community with certainty that for a five-year period, development consistent with the plan will be approved without further CEQA review or discretionary decision-making.

How Does the Streamlining Process Work?

Jurisdictions that opt in outline an area of contiguous or noncontiguous parcels that were identified in the locality's housing element site inventory. All development that occurs within the WHOZ must be consistent with the Specific Plan for the zone and the adopted sustainable communities strategy (SCS) or an alternative planning strategy (APS). See "About the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Alternative Planning Strategy" below for more information.

continued

About the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Alternative Planning Strategy

Under the Sustainable Communities Act, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) sets regional targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions from passenger vehicle use. In 2010, ARB established these targets for 2020 and 2035 for each region covered by one of the state's metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs).

Each MPO must prepare a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) as an integral part of its regional transportation plan (RTP). The SCS contains land use, housing and transportation strategies that, if implemented, would allow the region to meet its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. If the combination of measures in the SCS would not meet the regional targets, the MPO must prepare a separate alternative planning strategy (APS) to meet the targets.

The process for establishing a WHOZ is:

- Prepare and adopt a detailed Specific Plan and environmental impact report (EIR);
- Identify in the Specific Plan uniformly applied mitigation measures for traffic, water quality, natural resource protection, etc.;
- Identify in the Specific Plan uniformly applied development policies such as parking ordinances, grading ordinances, habitat protection, public access and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions;
- Clearly identify design review standards in the Specific Plan; and
- Identify a source of funding for infrastructure and services.

Not more than 50 percent of a jurisdiction's RHNA may be included in a WHOZ that accommodates 100 to 1,500 units.

The Specific Plan and EIR are valid for five years. After five years, the jurisdiction must review the plan and EIR, including conducting the CEQA analysis required in Public Resources Code section 21166, in order to extend the WHOZ for five additional years.

For a development project to receive streamlining within the WHOZ, the project must:

- Be consistent with the SCS;
- Comply with the development standards in the Specific Plan for the WHOZ;
- Comply with the mitigation measures in the Specific Plan for the WHOZ;
- Be consistent with the zonewide affordability requirements — at least 30 percent of the units affordable to moderate or middle-income households, 15 percent of the units affordable to lower-income households and 5 percent of the units affordable for very low-income households. No more than 50 percent of the units may be available to above-moderate-income households;

- Within developments affordable to households of above-moderate income, include 10 percent of units for lower-income households unless local inclusionary ordinance requires a higher percentage; and

- Pay prevailing wages.

If a developer proposes a project that complies with all of the required elements, a jurisdiction must approve the project without further discretionary or CEQA review unless it identifies a physical condition that would have a specific adverse impact on public health or safety.

AB 73 (Chiu, Chapter 371, Statutes of 2017) streamlines the housing approval process by allowing jurisdictions to create a housing sustainability district to complete upfront zoning and environmental review in order to receive incentive payments for development projects that are consistent with the ordinance. AB 73 is similar to SB 540 in concept; however, there are several key differences; for example, in AB 73:

- The housing sustainability district is a type of housing overlay zone, which allows for the ministerial approval of housing that includes 20 percent of units affordable to very low-, low- and moderate-income households;
- The ordinance establishing the housing sustainability district requires HCD approval and must remain in effect for 10 years;
- A Zoning Incentive Payment (unfunded) is available if HCD determines that approval of housing is consistent with the ordinance; and
- Developers must pay prevailing wages and ensure the use of a skilled and trained workforce.

Accountability Measures

The third aspect of the Legislature and the governor's housing package pertains to bills that seek to hold jurisdictions accountable for the lack of housing construction in their communities. While this view fails to acknowledge the many factors that affect housing construction and are beyond the

To make continued progress on housing in 2018, legislators should also consider creating more tools for local governments to fund infrastructure and affordable housing.

control of local government, the following measures significantly change existing law.

SB 167 (Skinner, Chapter 368, Statutes of 2017), AB 678 (Bocanegra, Chapter 373, Statutes of 2017), and AB 1515 (Daly, Chapter 378, Statutes of 2017) are three measures that were amended late in the 2017 legislative session to incorporate nearly all of the same changes to the Housing Accountability Act (HAA). The HAA significantly limits the ability of a jurisdiction to deny an affordable or market-rate housing project that is consistent with existing planning and zoning requirements (see “About the Housing Accountability Act” below). These measures amend the HAA as follows:

- Modifies the definition of mixed-use development to apply where at least two-thirds of the square footage is designated for residential use;
- Modifies the findings requirement to deny a housing development project to be supported by a preponderance of the evidence, rather than by substantial evidence in the record;
- Defines “lower density” to mean “any conditions that have the same effect or impact on the ability of the project to provide housing;”
- Requires an applicant to be notified if the jurisdiction considers a proposed housing development project to be inconsistent, not in compliance, or not in conformity with an applicable plan, program, policy, ordinance, standard, requirement or other similar provision. The jurisdiction must provide such notice within 30 days of the application being determined complete for a project with 150 or fewer housing units, and within 60 days for project with more than 150 units. If the jurisdiction fails to provide the required notice, the project is deemed consistent, compliant and in conformity with the applicable plan, program, policy ordinance, standard, requirement or other similar provision; and
- Deems a housing development project “consistent, compliant and in conformity with an applicable plan, program, policy, ordinance, standard, requirement or other similar provision if there is substantial evidence that would allow a reasonable person to conclude that the housing development project is consistent, compliant or in conformity.”

About the Housing Accountability Act

The Housing Accountability Act states, “The Legislature’s intent in enacting this section in 1982 and in expanding its provisions since then was to significantly increase the approval and construction of new housing for all economic segments of California’s communities by meaningfully and effectively curbing the capability of local governments to deny, reduce the density of or render infeasible housing development projects. This intent has not been fulfilled.”



SB 167, AB 678 and AB 1515 also provide new remedies for a court to compel a jurisdiction to comply with the HAA:

- If a court finds that a jurisdiction’s findings are not supported by a preponderance of the evidence, the court must issue an order compelling compliance within 60 days. The court may issue an order directing the jurisdiction to approve the housing development project if the court finds that the jurisdiction acted in bad faith when it disapproved or conditionally approved the housing development project;
- If a jurisdiction fails to comply with the court order within 60 days, the court must impose fines on the jurisdiction at a minimum of \$10,000 per unit in the housing development project on the date the application was deemed complete;
- If a jurisdiction fails to carry out a court order within 60 days, the court may issue further orders including an order to vacate the decision of the jurisdiction and to approve the housing development project as proposed by the applicant at the time the jurisdiction took the action determined to violate the HAA along with any standard conditions; and
- If the court finds that a jurisdiction acted in bad faith when it disapproved or conditionally approved a housing project and failed to carry out the court’s order or judgment within 60 days, the court must multiply the \$10,000 per-unit fine by a factor of five. “Bad faith includes but is not limited to an action that is frivolous or otherwise entirely without merit.”

continued

Other Measures of Importance

In addition to the notable bills described here, Gov. Brown signed several other measures that provide new inclusionary powers to local governments, require additional General Plan reporting, increase housing element requirements and expand HCD's ability to review actions taken at the local level.

AB 1505 (Bloom, Chapter 376, Statutes of 2017) allows a jurisdiction to adopt an ordinance that requires a housing development to include a certain percentage of residential rental units affordable to and occupied by households with incomes that do not exceed limits for households with extremely low, very low, low or moderate income (see "AB 1505 Offers Solution to Palmer Decision" below). Such an ordinance must provide alternative means of compliance such as in-lieu fees, off-site construction, etc.

HCD may review any inclusionary rental housing ordinance adopted after Sept. 15, 2017, as follows:

- If the ordinance requires more than 15 percent to be occupied by households earning 80 percent or less of area median income and the jurisdiction failed to either meet at least 75 percent of its share of its above-moderate income RHNA (prorated based on the length of time within the planning period) or submit a General Plan annual report;
- HCD may request an economic feasibility study with evidence that such an ordinance does not unduly constrain the production of housing; and
- Within 90 days of submission of the economic feasibility study, HCD must decide whether the study meets the section's requirements. If not, the city must limit the ordinance to 15 percent low-income.

AB 1505 Offers Solution to Palmer Decision

The court in *Palmer/Sixth Street Properties L.P. v. City of Los Angeles*, (2009) 175 Cal. App. 4th 1396, invalidated a Los Angeles inclusionary housing requirement contained in a Specific Plan for an area of the city as applied to rental units on the basis that its pricing controls violated the Costa-Hawkins Act, which outlawed traditional rent control in new buildings in California. The court reasoned that the Costa-Hawkins Act pre-empted the application of inclusionary housing ordinances to rental housing. As a result of the decision, many cities with inclusionary housing ordinances suspended or amended their ordinances as applied to rental units; some adopted affordable housing rental impact fees. AB 1505 offers a solution and response to the *Palmer* decision.

AB 879 (Grayson, Chapter 374, Statutes of 2017) expands upon existing law that requires, by April 1 of each year, general law cities to send an annual report to their respective city councils, the state Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and HCD that includes information related to the implementation of the General Plan, including:

- The city's progress in meeting its share of RHNA;
- The city's progress in removing governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing; and
- Actions taken by the city toward completion of the programs identified in its housing element and the status of the city's compliance with the deadlines in its housing element.

Under AB 879, all cities including charter cities must submit an annual report containing the above information. In addition, cities must also provide the following new information in the annual report:

- The number of housing development applications received in the prior year;
- The number of units included in all development applications in the prior year;
- The number of units approved and disapproved in the prior year;
- A listing of sites rezoned to accommodate that portion of the city's RHNA for each income level that could not be accommodated in its housing element inventory and any additional sites identified under the "no net loss" provisions;
- The net number of new units of housing that have been issued a "completed entitlement," building permit or certificate of occupancy thus far in the housing element cycle (identified by the Assessor's Parcel Number) and the income category that each unit of housing satisfied (distinguishing between rental and for-sale units);
- The number of applications submitted under the new processing provided for by Section 65913.4 (enacted by SB 35), the location and number of developments approved pursuant to this new process, the total number of building permits issued pursuant to this new process and total number of units constructed pursuant to this new process; and
- The number of units approved within a Workforce Housing Opportunity Zone.

AB 879 also requires cities to include additional information when they submit their housing element to HCD, including:

- An analysis of governmental constraints that must include local ordinances that “directly impact the cost and supply of residential development”; and
- An analysis of nongovernmental constraints that must include requests to develop housing at densities below those anticipated in site inventory and the length of time between receiving approval for housing development and submittal of an application for building permit. The analysis must also include policies to remove nongovernmental constraints.

AB 1397 (Low, Chapter 375, Statutes of 2017) makes numerous changes to how a jurisdiction establishes its housing element site inventory. These changes include the following:

- Sites must be “available” for residential development and have “realistic and demonstrated” potential for redevelopment;
- Parcels must have sufficient water, sewer and dry utilities or part of a mandatory program to provide such utilities;
- Places restrictions on using nonvacant sites as part of the housing element inventory;
- Places limitations on continuing identification of nonvacant sites and certain vacant sites that have not been approved for housing development; and
- Stipulates that lower-income sites must be between one-half acre and 10 acres in size unless evidence is provided that a smaller or larger site is adequate.

AB 72 (Santiago, Chapter 370, Statutes of 2017) provides HCD new broad authority to find a jurisdiction’s housing element out of substantial compliance if it determines that the jurisdiction fails to act in compliance with its housing element and allows HCD to refer violations of law to the attorney general. Specifically, AB 72:

- Requires HCD to review any action or failure to act by a jurisdiction that it determines is “inconsistent” with an adopted housing element or Section 65583, including any failure to implement any program actions included in the housing element;
- Requires HCD to issue written findings to the city as to whether the jurisdiction’s action or failure to act complies with the jurisdiction’s housing element or Section 65583 and provides no more than 30 days for the jurisdiction to respond to such findings. If HCD finds that the jurisdiction does not comply, then HCD can revoke its findings of compliance until the jurisdiction comes into compliance; and
- Provides that HCD may notify the attorney general that the jurisdiction is in violation of the Housing Accountability Act, Sections 65863, 65915 and 65008.

continued

Related Resources

For additional information and links to related resources, visit www.cacities.org/housing.

The “housing package” bills fall into three main categories: funding, streamlining and local accountability.

Looking Ahead

While it may appear that Gov. Brown and the Legislature made great progress in addressing the housing supply and affordability crisis gripping many regions of the state, the reality is somewhat more mixed. The passage of the 2017 housing package does not signal the end of the policy discussion. Aside from various incentive and funding measures, a portion of the housing package responded to a theme, championed by several advocacy groups and academics, that the local planning and approval process is the major cause of the state currently producing 100,000 units fewer annually than pre-recession levels. From a local government perspective, that assertion is incomplete and inaccurate. Going forward, it is time to dig deeper.

The legislative focus in 2017 lacked an exploration of other economic factors affecting the housing market. The foreclosure crisis resulted in displaced homeowners with damaged credit, widespread investor conversions of foreclosed single-family units into rentals and increasingly stringent lending criteria. Demographic factors may also affect demand as baby boomers with limited retirement savings and increased health-care costs approach retirement age. Younger residents, saddled with student debt, face challenges saving for down payments. Manufacturing and other higher-wage jobs are stagnating and being replaced via automation and conversion to a lower-wage service economy. Fewer skilled construction workers are available after many switched occupations during the recession.

Also missing in 2017 was a deeper examination of how other state policies intended to address legitimate issues affect land availability and the cost of housing. These include laws and policies aimed at limiting sprawl and protecting agricultural,

coastal and open-space land from development; and building codes, energy standards, disabled access, wage requirements and other issues.

The funding for affordable housing approved during the 2017 session was certainly welcome — yet given the demand, it falls far short of the resources needed. It is unlikely, however, that cities can expect additional state funding for housing — other than the housing bond on the November ballot — from the Legislature in 2018.

Although many changes were made to the planning and approval process in 2017, local governments are still waiting for the market to fully recover and developers to step forward and propose housing projects at the levels observed prior to the recession. In 2018, a fuller examination by the Legislature is needed to explore the reasons why developers are not proposing projects at the pre-recession levels. Local governments cannot approve housing that is not proposed.

To make continued progress on housing in 2018, legislators should also consider creating more tools for local governments to fund infrastructure and affordable housing. Some legislators have begun discussing the need to restore a more robust redevelopment and affordable housing tool for local agencies, and that is encouraging. Reducing the local vote thresholds for infrastructure and affordable housing investments would also be helpful.

For more information, visit www.cacities.org/housing or contact Jason Rhine, legislative representative; phone: (916) 658-8264; email: jrhine@cacities.org. ■

Acknowledgments

Part I of this document is excerpted and adapted from “Finding Solutions to the Affordable Housing Crisis” by Carolyn Coleman, which appeared in the March 2017 issue of *Western City* magazine, the monthly publication of the League of California Cities online at www.westerncity.com.

©2017 League of California Cities. All rights reserved.



2017 Housing Bills

Streamlining Bills:

- City-Initiated (SB 540, AB 73)
- vs. Developer-Initiated (SB 35)

Attachment B

Developer-Initiated Streamlining

SB 35

- ✓ Seeks to streamline multifamily housing project approvals by eliminating public input, prohibiting CEQA, and removing local discretion.
- ✓ Allows the developer to opt-in to streamlining.

Does it apply to my city?

- ✓ Applies if city didn't submit annual report for 2 years.
- ✓ Applies to cities where the number of building permits issued is less than city's share of RHNAs by income category for that *reporting period* (first 1/2 or last 1/2 of RHNAs assessment cycle).
- ✓ City remains eligible until HCD's determination for next reporting period.

Developer-Initiated Streamlining

SB 35: Does it apply to the site on which a project has been proposed?

Site Exclusions:

- ✓ Sites in Coastal zone;
- ✓ Prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance;
- ✓ Wetlands;
- ✓ Delineated earthquake zone;
- ✓ FEMA floodplain unless flood plain development permit;
- ✓ FEMA floodway unless no rise certification;
- ✓ Habitat for protected species;
- ✓ Zoned for non-residential use (unless GP allows residential)

Developer-Initiated Streamlining

Site Exclusions Continued:

- ✓ Site on which housing occupied by tenants demolished in last ten years;
- ✓ Site with existing rental housing occupied by tenants in last ten years required to be demolished;
- ✓ Site with historical structure required to be demolished for project; and
- ✓ Site is subject to Mobilehome Residency Law, the Recreational Vehicle Park Occupancy Law, the Mobilehome Parks Act or the Special Occupancy Act.

Developer-Initiated Streamlining

SB 35: Does the project qualify for streamlining?

- ✓ Multifamily housing development on site in which 75% adjoins parcels that are developed with urban uses.
- ✓ Inclusionary requirement:
 - 10% below 80% of AMI if annual report reflects fewer units of above-moderate approved than required;
 - 50% below 80% of AMI if annual report reflects fewer units of lower income issued building permits than required; or
 - If both, then developer chooses.

Developer-Initiated Streamlining

SB 35: Does the project qualify for streamlining? (Continued)

- ✓ Consistent with “objective zoning standards and objective design review standards.”
- ✓ “Objective” means: Uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion. No personal or subjective judgment.
- ✓ Consistent with housing density if density is compliant with maximum density.
- ✓ Development is a “public work” or construction workers will be paid at least the general prevailing wage rate. Requirement for “skilled and trained workforce.”

Developer-Initiated Streamlining

Project exclusion:

- ✓ Project involves subdivision of land unless (1) received tax credit financing; or (2) paid prevailing wages and skilled and trained workforce will be used.

Developer-Initiated Streamlining

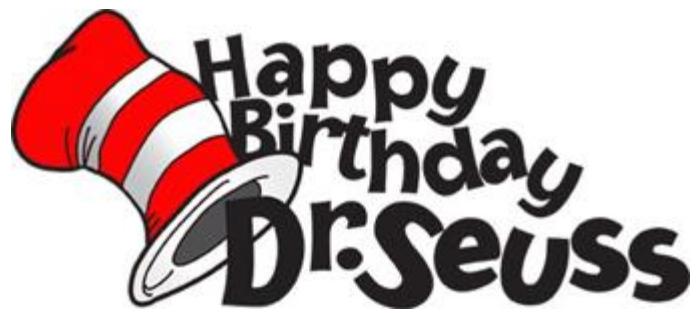
SB 35 applies to the project, now what?

- ✓ Review limited to compliance with objective standards published before submission of development application and broadly applicable.
 - If in conflict with “objective planning standards,” city must provide written documentation within 60 days (if <150 units) or 90 days (if >150 units) of an **application’s submittal**, or the project is deemed to satisfy the standards.
- ✓ City must complete “design review or public oversight” within 90 days (if <150 units) or 180 days (if >150 units) of an **application’s submittal**.
 - No public hearing required.
- ✓ No CEQA review.
- ✓ Limited parking requirements.

Possible Next Steps

- ✓ Decide whether your city wants to initiate streamlining under SB 540, AB 73, or by creating your own specific plan/overlay zone.
- ✓ Prepare lists of “objective planning standards” to be applied to projects under SB 35 and the HAA. If you already have a list, determine whether new standards should be added.
- ✓ Develop SB 35 eligibility checklist and process for reviewing applications where SB 35 is invoked.
- ✓ For projects utilizing SB 35, SB 540 or AB 73, verify compliance with requirements for payment of prevailing wage or utilizing a “skilled and trained workforce.”

March
6a.





CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

March 20, 2018

AGENDA ITEM

TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: MINUTES

Summary:

Attached for review and approval are the minutes from last month's regular meeting.

Recommendation:

Approve.

**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL
PLANNING COMMISSION
February 20, 2018
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Richárd called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Commission Secretary conducted roll call.

Present: Commissioner Carmen Brooks
 Commissioner Jane Fallon
 Commissioner Chris Wilson
 Vice Chair Victor Parker
 Chair Rose Richárd

Staff present:

- 1) Community Development Director Scott Charney
- 2) Senior Planner Colleen Doan
- 3) Assistant Planner Ryan Agbayani
- 4) Assistant City Attorney Gina Chung
- 5) Economic Development Manager Elise McCaleb

In addition, there were 2 people in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Richárd led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no public business from the floor.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

- a. Crescent Square Conformity Report Adding a Window to the South Elevation of One Home

Senior Planner Colleen Doan gave the staff report.

Bozena Jaworski, representing the property owner, introduced herself and made herself available for any questions.

There were no questions from the Commission. Chair Richárd called for a voice vote to receive and file the report.

The motion carried 5/0.

b. Economic Development Update

Economic Development Manager Elise McCaleb gave a presentation on Economic Development options in a post-Redevelopment era.

Commissioner Brooks asked if the City has reached out to other no-low property tax Cities regarding what they are doing for development projects in their jurisdictions.

Commissioner Wilson asked if the City was monitoring the new upcoming legislation from Sacramento.

Ms. McCaleb confirmed that she, the City Manager, and other City staff continue to monitor legislation from the State.

Vice Chair Parker suggested the City consider reaching out to the LA County Economic Development Agency.

Commissioner Fallon inquired about criteria for selecting “Business Friendly Cities”

Commissioner Wilson asked if Senate Bill 1 would be a resource for the City to utilize in future development projects. Ms. McCaleb noted that the SB1 funding may only be for transportation related projects, but that she would look into it further.

Chair Richárd called for a voice vote to receive and file the report.

The motion carried 5/0.

c. Annual Review of Properties With a Conditional Use Permits

Assistant Planner Ryan Agbayani and Senior Planner, Colleen Doan gave the staff report.

The Commission inquired whether a future tour of the Signal Hill Petroleum (SHP) drill sites under their Conditional Use Permit could be arranged. Staff agreed to schedule one or two tours with SHP.

Vice Chair Parker asked whether the electronic access records for the Crown Castle wireless communications tower could be reviewed on a quarterly basis. Staff agreed to the request.

Chair Richárd called for a voice vote to receive and file the report.

The motion carried 5/0.

d. 2018 Planning Commissioners Academy

Community Development Director Scott Charney gave the staff report.

Chair Richárd provided insight on her previous experience attending the conference.

The Commission selected Vice Chair Parker to attend the conference and Vice Chair Parker accepted.

Chair Richárd called for a voice vote to receive and file the report.

The motion carried 5/0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

It was moved by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Fallon to receive and file Consent Calendar.

The motion carried 5/0.

COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Fallon commented on the poor condition of the landscaping at the Wells Fargo business located at 2598 Cherry Avenue.

Commissioner Wilson asked about the schedule for repairing pot holes, specifically between E. Willow Street and E. Spring Street.

Vice Chair Parker commended staff for their efforts in facilitating the 2018 Homeless Count Event.

Chair Richárd inquired on the status of having a Public Works staff member present at future Planning Commission meetings. She also asked whether the Courtyard project located at 1933 Temple Ave. was for sale as noted on the sign posted on the property. Staff gave an update on the status of the project and noted property ownership had not

recently changed Chair Richárd also asked for a status update on the striping of E. Hill Street between Obispo Avenue and Redondo Avenue.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Vice Chair Parker and seconded by Commissioner Fallon to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on Tuesday, March 20, 2018, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 2175 Cherry Avenue, Signal Hill, CA, 90755.

The motion carried 5/0.

Chair Richárd adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Chair Rose Richárd

Attest:

Scott Charney
Commission Secretary

March
6b.





CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

March 20, 2018

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: CITY COUNCIL FOLLOW-UP

Summary:

Below for your review is a brief summary of the City Council's actions from the last City Council meeting(s).

Recommendation:

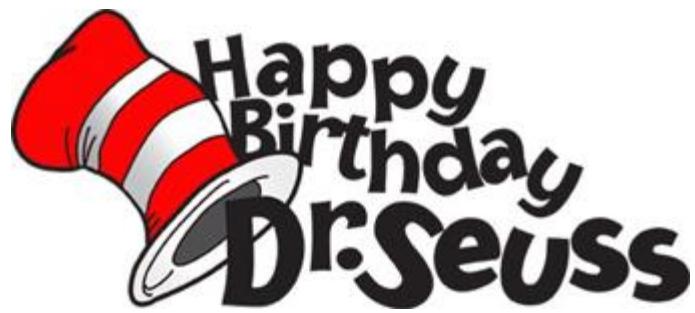
Receive and file.

Background and Analysis:

- 1) At the February 27, 2018, City Council meeting:
 - The City Council adopted a resolution confirming the determinations made in a Notice and Order dated November 20, 2017, for a previously vacant site on the south side of 29th Street, between Atlantic and California Avenues, and authorizing the City Manager to commence abatement in accordance with Signal Hill Municipal Code Section 8.12.110 if the nuisance is not abated.
 - The City Council scheduled a Public Fee Study Workshop for Tuesday, May 1, 2018. Planning Commissioners are encouraged to attend.

- 2) At the March 13, 2018, City Council meeting:
 - Staff presented the Annual Review of Properties with Conditional Use Permits, and the Annual Review of Institutional Permits. The City Council accepted both reports.

March
6c.





CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

March 20, 2018

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT STATUS REPORT

Summary:

Attached for your review is the monthly Development Status Report which highlights current projects.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
2351 Walnut Avenue	Proposal for a new warehouse (7,904 sf) and office building (first floor: 1,376 sf) (second floor: 675 sf) with associated landscaping, trash enclosure, and parking lot	Administrative Review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	Required	N/A	N/A	Required						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concept plans submitted by agent for prelim planning review (7/17) Well discovery completed and survey document received Planning review comments emailed to agent on 7/11/17. Met with agent on 7/14/17 at public counter to go over design recommendations Agent resubmitted revised drawings with renderings on 10/5/17. Met with agent on 10/26/17 at public counter to go over design recommendations. Agent resubmitted revised drawings on (11/3/17). Admin SPDR was approved on 11/13/17. Complete COA's were emailed to the agent on 12/7/17. However, the conditions are currently pending upon applicant's signature (3/18).
	Applicant: Roger Vititow											RA/JH
2200 E. Willow St.	Amendment to CUP 13-01 to extend the gas station hours of operation from 5 am to 10 pm seven days a week.	Amendment to CUP <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	7/15/15	Required							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community meeting held (2/15). Planning Commission public hearing on 7/14/15. A permanent plan to address on-site circulation issues has not been proposed (3/18).
	Applicant: Costco Wholesale											CTD

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director approval</u>	<u>PC approval</u>	<u>CC approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
3201 California Ave.	Abandoned well leak testing and WAR review.	Administrative Review <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A						N/A			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methane leak tests approved. Three Well Abandonment Reports (WARs) approved. Development plans are on hold (6/16).
SHP Inc.	Applicant: SHP Inc.											CTD/JH
2370 Walnut Avenue	Remodel for office and auto body repair facility.	Admin. SPDR and Lot Merger Applicant: Beetley for Caliber Collision Auto Center										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning review is approved. Lot merger has been submitted for review by City Engineer and 1st comments have been provided (10/17). Permit issued for remodel (9/17). Lot merger comments were returned to applicant with a request for backup documents (02/18).
2499 PCH	Remodel of commercial laundry.	Admin. SPDR <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req. Applicant: Bill Mylonas										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and public works review 1st comments were provided. Public improvements bond and lot merger are pending. Applicant has indicated they would like to pursue a CUP amendment to extend hours of operation (8/17). Excavation permit to demo wall issued by PW (9/17). Construction permit for interior TI issues on 9-29-17 (10/17). Improvement plans for alley dedication and re-design and merger documents are under review (3/18).
												CTD/JH

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director approval</u>	<u>PC approval</u>	<u>CC approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
2020 Walnut Avenue	Preliminary review of an 110,300 SF industrial park.	ZOA, Parcel Map and SPDR pending <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary review 1st and 2nd comments have been provided to applicant; submittal is pending (8/17). • Applicant has revised plans, conducted a developer outreach mtg. and participated in the City's neighborhood mtg. • Incomplete, conceptual plans were reviewed by PC at a workshop on Jan. 16, 2018 (1/18). • Partial revised plans submitted 2/08/18. • Staff sent notice to meet and review missing, or incomplete items on 2/14/18. • At the applicant's request staff scheduled the project for a 2/20/18 PC workshop and identified incomplete items. PC directed applicant to work with staff to refine design and complete missing items. • On 3/12/18, the applicant re-submitted plans without meeting or working with staff. • On 3/6/18 staff met with the applicant's architect to review revised plans, refine the design and edit the view analysis and revisions are pending. • Applicant has begun the traffic study and edits to the workplan for the Human Health Risk Assessment is pending (3/18).
		Applicant: Xebec										CTD

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
1501 E. 28th Street	Site paving and LID BMPs for a mobile fueling facility.	Admin. SPDR <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req. Applicant: Chuck Bleumel										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning, LID & grading approved. Grading & plumbing permit issued (9/17). Grading & paving complete. Install of LID system pending (10/17). CTD
2953 Obispo Ave.	A request to allow indoor soccer as a conditionally permitted use in the City.	ZOA CUP <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req. Applicant: Mike Biddle	N/A	Required	Required							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deposit submitted to begin coordination of workshops w/HOAs (7/14). Applicant requested to temporarily postpone request (12/14). Applicant submitted ZOA application to allow the indoor soccer use and a CUP to operate at the subject location. A workshop was conducted at the May PC mtg. Staff has conducted two evening site inspections and will schedule neighborhood and Commission visits, research parking standards, and prepare for a second neighborhood meeting in preparation of a ZOA and CUP for the use as time permits (8/17). CTD

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director approval</u>	<u>PC approval</u>	<u>CC approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
1136 Willow St.	Application for a ZOA to allow brewing and tasting rooms w/allowance for food trucks in industrial zones.	ZOA 16-04 CUP 16-02 <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	6/21/16	7/12/16	Building Permit Issued: 11/28/16 Building Permit Finaled: 9-1-17			5/22/18			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Commission workshop held 5/17/16 to discuss the ZOA and CUP. City Council approved on 7/12/16, and the ordinance became effective on 8/25/16. Building permit issued on 11/28/16. Plumbing installation completed and inspected. (6/17) Grand Opening on September 16th (9/17). Sign permit issued (11/17). A neighborhood meeting was held on 3/12/18 per CUP cond. Staff reported to Council during the CUP Annual Review that at the meeting no negative impacts or concerns were reported and a “don’t drink and drive” sign was posted. Brewery owners indicated they would like to amend their CUP for extended hours of operation and outdoor seating (3/18).
Micro-brewery ZOA/CUP	Applicant: Daniel Sundstrom											CTD/JH
Rose Avenue	Application for a CUP to allow vehicle body repair and painting as an Auto Center accessory use.	CUP 16-03 <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	11/15/16	12/13/16							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Commission recommended approval on 11/15/16. City Council approved on 12/13/16. Class Auto opened for business in 2017. Outdoor storage was removed. The draft parking covenant was approved by legal counsel and will be recorded by the applicant (2/18).
Collision auto repair CUP	Accessory Dealership: Mercedes Benz Applicant: Class Auto Center Inc.											CTD

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
999 Willow Avenue	Remodel of commercial bldg.	Admin SPDR										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Review 1st comments have been circulated to applicant and reviewed at a mtg. w/ Planning and Public Works and revisions are pending (8/17). Revised plans submitted and approved by Planning. 1st plan check comments have been issued (12/19/17). Applicant re-submitted on 2/27 2nd plan check comments completed 3/9/18 and applicant pick-up is pending (3/18).
Bldg. remodel	Applicant: 2H Construction LLC	Admin SPDR										CTD
2501 Cherry Avenue 701 E. 28 th Street	Request to install solar panels over parking areas and on roof tops of existing commercial buildings.	Admin SPDR <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	7/3/17	N/A	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admin. Planning approval. Plan check submittal pending (7/17). Plans submitted; & sent to CSG (9/17). 1st submittal comments routed back to applicant. Unauthorized tree removal repair actions pending (12/17). Applicant re-submittal received for 2nd plan check 2/13/18. Landscape plans prepared by the solar installer were received and installation permit was issued 3/9/18. Landscape plan check comments were completed 3/13/18 and applicant response is pending. (3/18).
	Applicant: Orion Systems Inc.											CTD/JH

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> approval	<u>PC</u> approval	<u>CC</u> approval	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
2775 E Willow Street	New outdoor storage area with retaining wall at north property line and (8' high) security fence around the perimeter of the property Applicant: Jim Kirby (LA Prep, INC,)	Admin SPDR	9/11/17	N/A	N/A				10/08/19 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received initial inquiry for project on 3/14/17. Planning, Building, and Public Works Departments gave approval for the grading and retaining wall plans on 9/11/17. Retaining wall, grading, and paving permits were issued on 10/18/17. Building permit for perimeter fence was issued to fence contractor on 11/30/17. The perimeter fence has been constructed. However, a final inspection has not been conducted for the site. It was noted that the fence on the driveway along E. Willow St. is not in the correct location (3/18).
2475 Cherry Avenue Bldg. remodel	Mother's Market TI of former Fresh & Easy grocery, including a new outdoor dining space Applicant: SHP for Mother's Market	CUP 17-01 SPDR 17-04 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	8/15/17	9/12/17	9/12/18						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External plans approved and permit is ready to issue (12/17). 1st review of Industrial Waste (IW) Permit completed w/comments. Internal TI plans approved and permit issued on 12/13/17. Revised plans and application for IW permit pending (12/17). Inspections ongoing (1/18). Landscape/WELO plan approval pending (2/18). Internal permit issued 11/1/17. C of O issued 2/15/18. Grand Opening held on 2/17/2018 (3/18).

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	Expires	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
3395 Orange Avenue (Sinclair Gas Station)	Tenant improvement to expand gas station market into the existing mechanic bays. Applicant: Signal Hill Oil Corporation	Preliminary Planning Review										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received PDF plans via email on 2/1/18. • Spoke to the agent-architect on 2/23/18 regarding the plans. I informed him that we will need a \$208.00 planning review fee before I can formally draft my comments. • \$208.00 planning review fee received on 3/6/18. • Emailed correction list to agent-architect on 3/14/18. • Spoke to agent-architect to go over correction list on 3/15/18. • Project is pending upon resubmittal of plans (3/18). RA

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Commercial-Industrial

Business Licenses and Permit Summary

- Planning Department staff reviewed and approved 8 business licenses.
- Building Department staff issued 17 permits including 1 residential solar permit. The valuation of the projects is approximately \$108,750.00 with permit revenues at \$2,340.00.

Training/Tours/Events

- Community Development staff attended the Mother's Market grand opening event.
- Community Development staff participated in the Emergency Preparedness training.
- Director Scott Charney and Admin. Assistant Phyllis Thorne are participating on the City website re-design committee.
- Director Scott Charney attended a Proposition 64 sub-committee facility tour.
- Community Development staff are preparing the Department two-year budget.
- Planning staff are preparing the General Plan Annual Progress Report.

Ongoing/Upcoming Projects

- Conceptual plans for the Heritage Square/CBD project continue to be refined and SHP is conducting their phase I public outreach.
- The City Attorney, City Manager, and city staff continue to meet with SHP regarding a master development agreement for future projects citywide.



City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Auto Center Vehicle Storage/Auction

<u>Address</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Application</u>	Term I			Term II		<u>Status</u>
			Term	Submit Permanent Improvement Plan	Review/Approve Permanent Improvement Plan	Extension	Install Permanent Improvements	
1250 Street	28 th Auto Center Vehicle Storage Yard	Permanent Improvement Terms	Expires 8/12/19	Tentatively 4/2017	PC Review of permanent improvements plan is on hold.	Optional year	1 TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deposit payment was paid (8/16). Business license was issued (8/16). Compliance Plan approved w/final edits (9/16). Non-oil field related storage removal is still pending and staff have inquired about the removal time frame (4/17). Following the recent rainfall, a plan to improve stormwater BMP's was developed and installation of improvements is pending (5/17) Storage removal is pending per the Compliance Plan. SHP has indicated that they will likely not extend the lease beyond the current 3 year term. Therefore they will not be preparing a permanent improvement plan. Unrelated on-site storage removal is nearly complete. Erosion control maintenance items have been upgraded (12/17). <p>CTD</p>
1241 Burnett Street	Dealer's Choice Auto Auction.	Permanent improvements pending						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocated Mercedes Benz auto auction site from auto center at Mercedes to subject location. Permanent improvement plans have been postponed (2/18). <p>CTD</p>

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Auto Center Dealership Improvements

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
1500 E. Spring Street	<p>Honda Expansion Revision: A request to make improvements at the existing auto dealership, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 802 sf showroom addition; • 262 sf office area addition; • 1,300 sf service dept. write-up area; and • New facade treatment and signage. <p>Applicant: Goree Architects for Long Beach Honda</p>	SPDR 17-02 <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	3/22/17	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for a SPDR received on 2/7/17. • The previous 2/21/17 approval was rescinded. PC approved a new application with revised plans on 3/22/17. • Applicant submitted plans for building plan check on 4/4/17. Both Building and Planning plan checks were completed on 5/9/17. • The applicant submitted a modified exterior lighting plan (rectangular fixtures) on 4/20/17 and went to public hearing on 5/16/17. • Planning Commission upheld existing standard of rounded light fixtures and denied the Honda's proposed rectangular fixtures. • Drywall complete. Stucco started (12/17). • Sign permit package was approved by both planning and building; permit issued. • Stucco and LID excavation inspected (1/18). • Grand Opening was in February 2018. • Contractor installed blue channel letters on blue exterior of building for "Signal Hill Auto Center" sign.

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Auto Center Dealership Improvements

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR/CUP			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
1500 E. Spring Street	Applicant: Goree Architects for Long Beach Honda											<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff reached out to the sign contractor and the Long Beach Honda General Manager to discuss the lack of contrast in color. Issue has been resolved and they will install white channel letters on the blue exterior of the building for the "Signal Hill Auto Center" sign. The projected date of completion is 3/31/18 (3/18). RA
1400 Spring St. City of SH Successor Agency	In preparation for a new Mazda dealership. Applicant: City Successor Agency and Glenn E. Thomas	SPDR pending <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methane leak tests completed and approved. Two WARs have been submitted and approved. DDA and Neg. Dec were approved, by Council on 6/13/17. Applicant is working on SPDR submittal (2/18). EM

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Wireless Communication Facilities

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2411 Skyline Dr.	A request to add 2 new Tower Dishes and 3 Antennas, to the Cell Tower as allowed by CUP 99-05 (Cal. Internet). Applicant: Crown Castle	Administrative to add equipment allowed under CUP 99-05	✓	N/A	N/A	Building permit issued 2/5/16						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised plans for Telepacific equipment approved and bldg. permits issued (6/17). • Applicant working with SCE for power (10/17). • No inspection requested yet (1/18). CTD/JH
2411 Skyline Dr.	Request to install (5) new MW flat panel antennas, 5 ¼ feed lines, and new mounts Applicant: Crown Castle on behalf of Vectus, Inc.	Administrative to add equipment allowed under CUP 99-05	✓	N/A	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received submittal checklist and documents. • Emailed preliminary zoning comments to agent on 10/17/17. • Agent resubmitted the FCC compliance report. A follow-up correction email was sent to the agent on 11/17. • Spoke to a representative from applicant's consultant firm on 12/4/17 to discuss outstanding corrections. A follow-up email was also sent. • The applicant resubmitted a revised compliance report on 1/4/18. Compliance report is currently under review. • Review of FCC compliance report is completed. Applicant is cleared to submit for building plan check (3/18). RA

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Wireless Communication Facilities

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2411 Skyline Dr.	Request to install 4 new MW flat panels, 4 feedlines, new mounts and equipment in existing shelter. Applicant: Crown Castle on behalf of Spectrumlink Inc.	CUP 99-05 Amendment required per audit totals exceeded.		TBD								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant is requesting auto approval per co-location legislation. • Per City Attorney review of State co-location law, request was approved with "no significant change" determination (2/18). • Plan check was completed on 1/30/18 and a valuation has been requested to calculate fees for permits issuance. (3/18) CTD
1855 Coronado rooftop facility	Six 6' high panel, 9 RRUs antennas, new hybrid cables and larger screen boxes screen the equipment Applicant: Core Dev.	Administrative to modify CUP 08-03	✓	N/A	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans ready for permit issuance, applicant notified on 5/16 and 9/16. • Third reminder sent (1/17). CTD
2525 Cherry Avenue	Removing and replacing the 3 existing antennas Applicant: Core Dev. for Sprint	Administrative to modify CUP 02-01	✓	N/A	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building permit ready for issuance 1/26/16. • Reminders sent for permit issuance on 3/16, 7/16, 9/16, and 12/16. • Final reminder sent that plans expire on 1/25/17. • Building permit issued on 1/13/17. • No inspection requested yet. (11/17). CTD/JH

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Wireless Communication Facilities

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
2201 Orange Avenue	Remove 3 existing antennas and replace them with 3 antennas which are the same size and shape Applicant: Crown Castle for T-Mobile	Administrative to modify 07-04	✓	N/A	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building permit issued on 12/7/16. No inspection requested yet (11/17). CTD/JH
1220 E. Hill St.	Installation of a new (67'+/-) Verizon Wireless Monopalm with Related Equipment Applicant: Peter Cavanna	Administrative	✓	N/A	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application and deposit received on 8/7/17 First review corrections emailed to applicant-agent on 9/11/17 Resubmittal package was received via FedEx. Routed plans to Building Safety and Public Works for review. Conditions of approval were received by both Building Safety and Public Works Departments on 2/22/18. Conducted a conference call with the agent on 3/13/18 to discuss conditions and the next steps of the CUP process. Both the Senior Building Inspector, Project Planner, and City Engineer were present. Follow-up email sent on 3/13/18 to discuss View Policy (3/18). RA

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

			REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
Address	Project Description	Application	<u>Director approval</u>	<u>PC approval</u>	<u>CC approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
2518 Willow St.	New front entry electronic gate w/stone veneer pilasters, update guard shack Applicant: Willow Ridge Homeowners Association	Administrative Review □ WELO req.	✓	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued 6/2/16						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building permit issued 6/2/16. • Front gate installed and inspected. • Landscaping being installed (8/17). • New monument sign completed (10/17). • Contacting applicant regarding final inspection (2/18) CTD/JH
2016 E. 19 th St	441 sf addition for a new bedroom, new bathroom and new detached 2-car garage to an existing single-family dwelling Applicant: Miguel Munoz	Administrative Review □ WELO req.	✓	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued: 11/21/16	11/21/17	2/19/18	Exp	Exp		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building permit issued 11/21/16. • Construction seems to have stalled. • A CTL letter with extension info was posted and sent (11/17). • Applicant requested a 90 day extension. • Notice letters were sent, comment period ended 11/20/2017. • 90 day extension approved. 11/21/2017. • No further construction observed (1/18). • Staff mailed and posted a letter for a final extension request (2/18). • Property owner has stated that they lost their contractor, but not confirmed their request for a 2nd extension. Staff is confirming ad will likely bring the 2nd request to PC in April (3/18). CTD/JH

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

			REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
Address	Project Description	Application	Director approval	PC approval	CC approval	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	Expires	1st Ext.	2nd Ext.	
3347 Brayton Ave.	Remodel of the front SFD to include a 271 sf addition and new 1-car garage on the first floor and a 731 sf second story addition	SPDR 15-02 <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	4/14/15	N/A	Building Permit Issued 4/15/16			5/31/17                                     <img alt="			

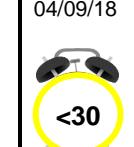
City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

			REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status	
Address	Project Description	Application	<u>Director approval</u>	<u>PC approval</u>	<u>CC approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>		
1995 St. Louis Ave.	Demolish existing dwelling and garage and construct a two story 3,072 sf SFD with attached 3-car garage Applicant: Seth Sor for Kimberly and Phat Ly	SPDR 15-04 ☒ WELO req.	N/A	8/11/15	N/A	Demo Permit Issued 4/1/16 Grading Permit Issued 4/27/17 Building Permit Issued 9/25/17			9/28/16 (Demo finalized) 10/19/18 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolition permit finalized on 8/31/16. Methane assessment approved, no barrier required (12/16). Grading permit issued on 4/27/17. CTL expires on 10/19/18. Notices mailed (5/17). On 5/15/17, applicant inquired about floor plan revision to relocate bedroom #3 to the second floor. Staff informed that change requires Planning Commission review. Staff has not heard further from applicant about the change (6/17). Construction permit issued on 9-25-17 (10/17). Foundation started (12/17). Foundation for fence inspected (1/18). Slab rebar in process (3/18). RA
2260 Walnut Ave.	A proposal for a new two story 1,894 sf SFD with attached 2-car garage on a vacant lot	SPDR 16-05 ☐ WELO req.	N/A	Required	N/A							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leak test passed, vent cone was not installed (2/15). Well survey and access exhibit approved (9/15). Story poles were installed 1 month late and a letter extending the comment time frame was mailed. The extended comment time frame ended on 8/12/16. One request for a view analysis was made and the report has been prepared. Revisions to the design to improve views have not been submitted (8/17). 	

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director approval</u>	<u>PC approval</u>	<u>CC approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
	Applicant: Santana Investors											• Staff received a report and inquiries indicating the property is for sale (12/17). CTD
2366 Cerritos	490.5 sf addition for a new master bedroom, new bathroom and new family room to an existing single-family dwelling Applicant: Antonio Quintero	Administrative Review <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	✓	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued: 11/07/17		11/02/18 				• Building permit issued 11/07/18. (11/17) • No inspections requested to date (3/18). CTD/JH
2055 Terrace Drive N.	SFGD remodel and elevator install, Phase I View Analysis and request for Reasonable Accommodation Applicant: Rama Singhal	Admin. SPDR	9/13/17	NA	NA	9/13/18 Building Permit Issued 10/11/17		04/09/18 				• Applicant submitted a written request for Reasonable Accommodation for elevator encroachment into garage. A Phase I View Analysis was conducted and letters of "No Impact" were received. • Permits issued (10/17). • Foundation poured (11/17). • Stucco inspected (1/18). • Stucco and roof completed. Interior work continuing. (3/18). CTD
2179 Temple Ave.	Conversion of a two-story SFD into a duplex with each unit occupying an entire floor; new detached garage structure consisting of (2) two-car garages at rear of property.	Administrative SPDR 18-01	2/9/18	N/A	N/A							• Received application and preliminary conceptual plans. • Drafted correction list. • Reviewed revised plans and conducted Admin SPDR with planning team. • Coordinated review with the Building Safety and Public Works Departments.

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> approval	<u>PC</u> approval	<u>CC</u> approval	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	Expires	1 st Ext.	2 nd Ext.	
	Applicant: Tizita and Asrat Bekele											<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafted Admin SPDR Conditions of Approval. Emailed final Conditions of Approval to authorized agent on 2/9/18 for signature of applicant (3/18). RA

Large Subdivisions (5 or more lots) and Multi-family Developments

Crescent Square	25 three-story detached single-family dwellings at the N/E corner of Walnut and Crescent Heights Street on a 3.18-acre lot	SPDR 14-04 ZOA 14-03 VTTM 72594 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	8/12/14	9/2/14	Grading Permit Issued 8/29/16 Phase 1 and 2 Building Permits Issued 9/13/17 Phase 3 Building Permits Issued 10/17/17		8/14/19				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Model home permits issued on 12/7/16. Model construction and landscaping complete (6/23/2017). Foundations in progress for rest of homes. Revisions to the model home parking plan were approved by PC at the July mtg. (7/17) Streets, fences and retaining walls are in process (8/17). DOGGR and BRE clean-up items pending for 8/25 homes. Building permits pulled for Phase 1 and Phase 2 SFDs (9/17). Framing in process (10/17) Building permits pulled for Phase 3 SFDs (11/17). Coordination of approved design details is underway (12/17). Stucco and drywall nearly complete on Phase 1 lots. Phase 2 and 3 framing pending (2/18). Phase 2 began stucco. Phase 3 framing is started. Phase 1 driveways, walkways and fences started (3/18).
Walnut/ Crescent Heights St.	Applicant: Far West Industries											CTD/JH

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
Zinnia (formerly Gundry Hill) 1500 E Hill St.	72 multiple-family, affordable units, three and four stories in height and a community building, community garden, tot lot and courtyard with on-site management on a 1.61-acre lot Applicant: Meta Housing	Administrative Review (SPDR 15-01) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	Approved 2/18/15	N/A	N/A	Building Permit Issued 11/30/15			11/09/19 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framing for all three buildings are completed, roofing started. • Underground utilities installed (3/17). • Exterior finishes being applied (5/17). • Building One C of O issued 12-1-17. • Building Two estimated completion date 1-1-18. (12/17) • Building 2 and 3 C of O issued 12-21-17. Residents have reported some maintenance problems that staff is following up on. A ribbon cutting is scheduled for 3/23 (3/18). <p>JH/SC</p>
2508 E. Willow (Willow Ridge)	TI: Deck repair to 24 decks Dumont Engineering for Willow Ridge HOA											<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan check approved 9/20/17 • Permit pulled 10/26/17 • No inspections requested yet (12/17). • Stucco inspected (1/18). • Lathe inspections underway (3/18). <p>JH</p>
The Courtyard 1939 Temple Avenue	Residential development on a .6-acre lot for 10 condominium units (5 buildings with 2 attached units) two stories and three stories in height. SP-21, Courtyard Residential Specific Plan to deviate from current RH zoning for 3-stories height and a reduced front and	SPDR 16-02 TTM 74232 ZOA 16-03 (new Specific Plan) <input type="checkbox"/> WELO req.	N/A	5/17/16	Required							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 wells discovered, leak tested and vent cones installed (8/15). • View Notice mailed 10/26/15. Planning Commission (PC) workshop #1: 12/15/15. • View Notice for revised plans mailed 2/17/16. PC workshop #2: 3/15/16. PC public hearing: 5/17/16. • At the 6/28/16 City Council (CC) meeting, CC continued the ZOA to the 9/13/16 CC meeting. • New story poles were installed

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
The Courtyard 1939 Temple Avenue (cont.)	rear setback.											(10/16). Neighborhood meeting held on 10/10/16. • CC held a study session on 12/13/16 and recommended denial without prejudice of ZOA at the next CC meeting. • City Council denied the project without prejudice on 1/10/17. • New project can be submitted without a 1 year waiting period. • As preparation for the new submittal, a neighborhood meeting was conducted to review revised plans. • Following the meeting four new view analyses were requested. • New plans and application were submitted on 3/16/17 and the view analysis was received 4/10/17. • PC workshop was conducted on 5/16/17. PC directed the applicant to: • Clean-up and maintain the site, • Revise the story pole ribbons to match the roof pitch and • Revise the view report photos to be more clear, • Deliver and review the view reports with the residents, • Respond to workshop questions from the public per bldg. heights; and • Revise plans per staff direction (6/17). • Revised plans and view reports were received and a neighborhood mtg. was conducted with residents, who requested the additional story poles
	Applicant: High Rhodes Property Group											

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director approval</u>	<u>PC approval</u>	<u>CC approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
The Courtyard 1939 Temple Avenue (cont.)												and ribbons for the northerly bldgs. be installed to accurately reflect roof lines and view impacts (8/17). • Some new story poles had been installed and revised view analysis reports were sent to residents which now show views being blocked for at least two residents. • The developer has indicated they will be lowering the northerly units by approximately 12". • A revised preliminary grading plan and view analysis reports showing the height reduction must be submitted in order to proceed to a public workshop. (2/18). CTD
2599 Pacific Coast Highway	Residential SP-10 on a .4-acre lot 1 st concept plan had 14 attached units 2 nd concept plan had 12 attached units 3 rd concept plan had 10 detached units 4 th concept plan has 9 detached units 5 th concept plan has 7 units; 3 detached and 4 attached on the 1 st floor	ZOA, SPDR, TTM,	N/A	Required	Required							• Staff met w/owner who reported an unsuccessful lot consolidation outreach effort (9/12). • A revised design (10 units) more closely meets the intent of SP-10. • Access & guest parking revised (6/14). • PC requested additional design changes. Plan revised to 9 units & met most of the standards. Some buildings still exceed height limit. • Condo map and story pole plan were submitted and view analysis request letter was sent 4/1/16. • Due to delays of story pole installation, viewing period was extended 4/14/16. Story poles were

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

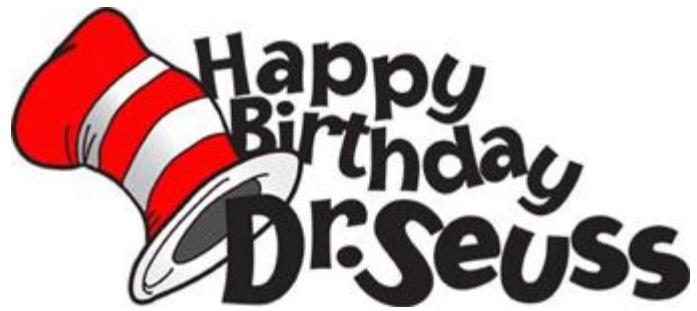
Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
2599 Pacific Coast Highway cont.	Residential SP-10 on a .4-acre lot											installed and comments received. A view analysis report was prepared & reviewed with residents. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due to impacts on views, the applicant further reduced bldg. heights however, most still exceed the 30' height limit.• City Engineer completed review of the on-site sewer conditions and will require repair and certification by the County for construction over the line.• Review of the revised view report completed, story pole cert submitted.• Due to a fire on-site a code enforcement case was opened to verify the bldg. is fire safe and not being occupied as a residence and site clean-up items are required. Final inspections (3/17).• A neighborhood mtg. was held 2/23/17 and nearby residents and property owners noted that 6/9 of the bldgs. are over the height limit and blocking views.• Concerns were voiced about traffic, the density of the project, and parking and traffic impacts on an already impacted neighborhood and alley.• The applicant was instructed to meet with the neighbors and develop options to revise the project.• Staff prepared a detailed memo following the meeting regarding project deficiencies and past Council
Applicant: Mike Afiuny												

City of Signal Hill
Community Development Department
Development Status Report
March 20, 2018

Residential

Address	Project Description	Application	REVIEW			SPDR			CTL			Status
			<u>Director</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>PC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>CC</u> <u>approval</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>1st Ext.</u>	<u>2nd Ext.</u>	
2599 Pacific Coast Highway (cont)	Residential SP-10 on a .4-acre lot											<p>direction on a similar project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant submitted a revised site plan with 1 less unit and reduced bldg. heights on several bldgs. However, 5/8 units still exceed max. bldg. height and may still block views. • Applicant requested mtg. and staff reiterated they should not expect recommendation of approval if bldg. hts. exceed regs. and block views. • Applicant indicated they would revise plans. • Staff noted revised plans would have to be reviewed by City Traffic Engineer to address parking and traffic impact concerns (7/17). • Revised plans with a combination of two and three-story units were submitted. A new story pole plan was prepared and reviewed by staff and story poles have been installed (1/18). • New View Analysis Reports were submitted on 2/1/2018 and the applicant is in the process of reviewing the reports with the property owners who requested them (3/18). <p>CTD</p>
	Applicant: Mike Afiuny											

March
6d.





CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

March 20, 2018

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE CHAIR
AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: SCOTT CHARNEY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: IN THE NEWS

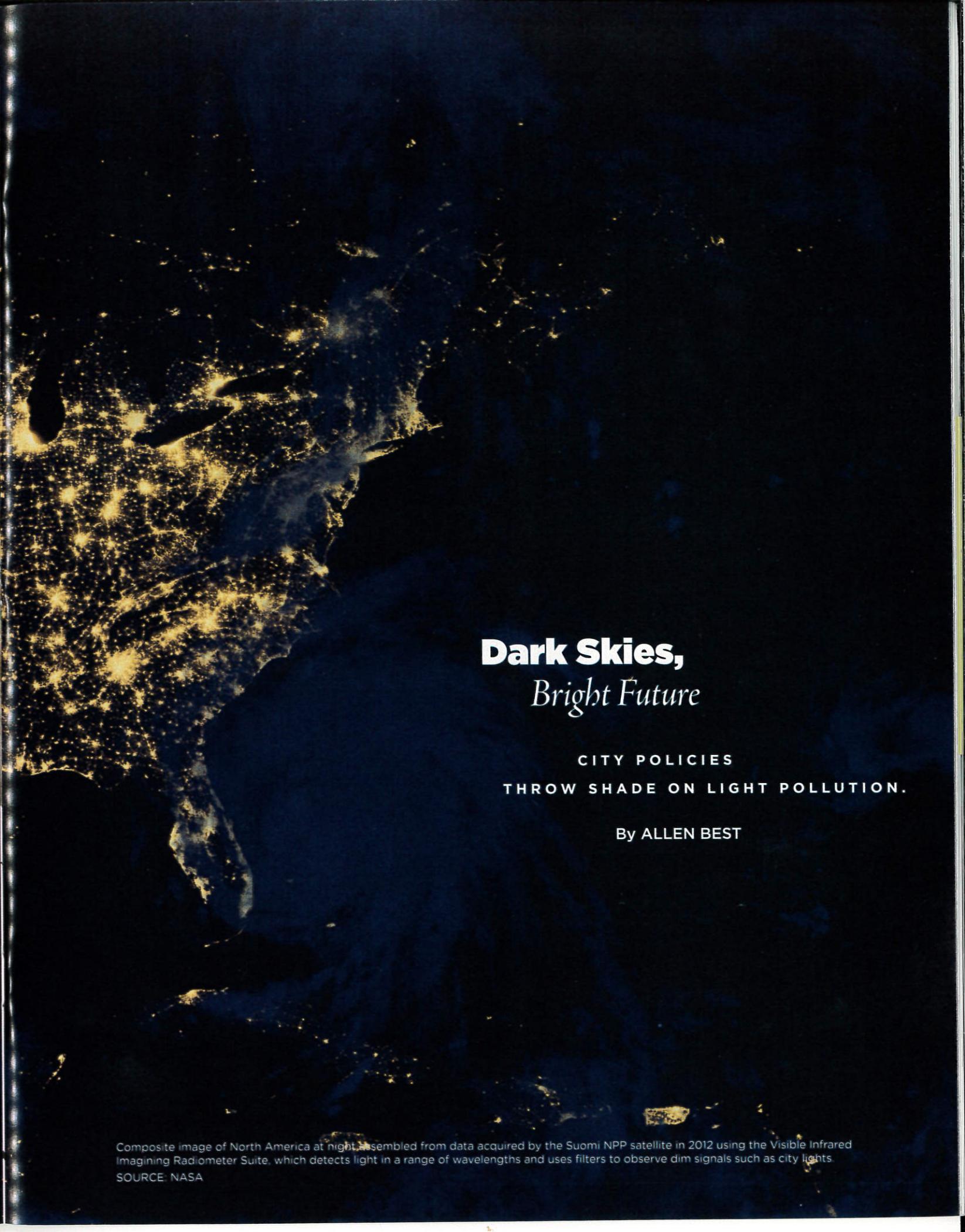
Summary:

Articles compiled by Staff that may be of interest to the Commission include:

- Dark Skies Bright Future
- Near Northside Quality of Life Agreement
- Regulating Short-Term Rentals
- Shipping Container Homes Pose Zoning Challenges for Municipalities

Recommendation:

Receive and file.



Dark Skies, *Bright Future*

CITY POLICIES
THROW SHADE ON LIGHT POLLUTION.

By ALLEN BEST

Composite image of North America at night assembled from data acquired by the Suomi NPP satellite in 2012 using the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite, which detects light in a range of wavelengths and uses filters to observe dim signals such as city lights.
SOURCE: NASA

B

BACK IN JANUARY, I returned home one night to the disconcerting spectacle of my front yard bathed in harsh light, as if something had gone wrong. Living in metro Denver, I never expect to see a truly dark sky. Polaris and the dippers, big and little, can still be seen, but it's usually like looking through a dirty window.

This was different, though. The owner of the parking lot across the street had installed energy-efficient light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, with brighter light to ensure safety for patrons. But the light that spilled into my yard was bright enough for reading a newspaper. Instead of secure, I felt accosted, as if a stranger had begun loitering on my porch.

Light trespass has been a problem since the arrival of electricity allowed us to banish the night. Many jurisdictions have codes that seek to limit it. Some are better than others, but all succeed only to the extent that they're enforced. Other regulations seek to tackle the broader problem of man-made light blotting out the stars, what many call light pollution.

Some places, including Flagstaff, Arizona, home to two astronomical observatories, have proven that you can have it all: stars in the sky and safety and commerce. Regulations adopted there nearly 60 years ago enjoy broad support. Mass retailers, accustomed to few restraints, soon learn that things are different in Flagstaff.

The two observatories make darker skies part of the local economy—102 people work there, and dark skies are a nuanced component of the tourism business. The U.S. Naval Observatory, which has a mission of

delivering information useful to U.S. defense, makes dark skies patriotic. "It really does a lot for our quality of life," says Dan Folke, AICP, the planning director in Flagstaff.

LED growing pains

Technological development of lighting has had a growth spurt lately. But after Edison patented the first incandescent bulb in 1879, the next big thing was fluorescent bulbs, unveiled at the New York World's Fair in 1939. Later came mercury, high-pressure vapor bulbs, and so on. But now technology is moving fast, especially since LEDs began arriving in the market in the early 2000s.

LEDs can deliver robust cost savings and reduce energy use, an important element in ambitious climate-action plans. Edison's incandescent bulbs delivered 10 lumens for every watt of power; LEDs can deliver more than 100 lumens per watt. Lumens measure the level of brightness. Although they cost more than incandescents, manufacturers have promised LEDs can last as much as 25 times longer than some of the older lighting technologies.

But communities have also stumbled as they rushed to curb costs and realize energy savings. California's college town of Davis is something of a living laboratory, says Mitch Sears, the city's sustainability program manager. "You learn by mistakes as much as you learn by success," he says.

Davis, at the cutting edge, tested LED lights in street fixtures in 2011. Getting no pushback, the city set out to replace all of its streetlights with LEDs. That's when emails and phone calls flooded city offices. After the city council halted the retrofit, the city staff consulted with the California Lighting Technology Center at the University of California-Davis and engaged with several manufacturers.

Davis officials had missed something at the outset. Many others have, too. The LEDs delivered a different kind of light than the older high-pressure sodium fixtures they replaced. Some have likened it to being under the torch of an arc welder. Its intensity enhances blues and whites, whereas older lights enhance reds and yellows. To understand it, you have to understand color temperatures, which are described on the Kelvin scale.

For some of us non-physicists, it's bizarre. The scale's range is based on what a piece of metal would look like if heated. At 2,000 to 3,000 Kelvin, you get light that is white but warm, such as you might want for your bedroom. At higher Kelvins, the light "cools" and brightens. At 4,600 to 6,000 K, it's whit-

ish to blue, more like daylight—or, as in my front yard in January, like a police lineup.

In Davis, after the first stumble, city officials surveyed residents, the majority of whom preferred the warmest LED lights in the spectrum, says Sears. That gave Davis officials enough confidence to replace the 650 LEDs originally installed, at a cost of \$350,000, and begin the methodical replacement of other streetlights. They don't save quite as much energy, but they're easier on the eye.

Then came another phase: lights for the parks and paths connecting neighborhoods. On shorter poles, the upward globes that imitate the gas lamps of old, sending light skyward, were replaced by a cobra-headed fixture to more efficiently direct light downward. And these LEDs were dimmer, too—much dimmer than the 2011 test lights.

Residents soon adjusted to lower levels of light. Sears says energy savings have exceeded 90 percent. "It's part science, part how-does-it-feel?" he says. "That's what lighting is all about."

Overexposure

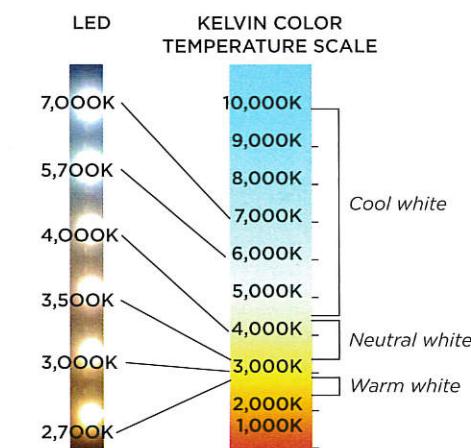
A large body of research conducted in recent decades points to adverse effects in the natural world from extravagantly lit human ecosystems. Newly hatched turtles in coastal areas, for example, will get drawn inland to lights instead of plodding out to the sea. In doing so, they risk becoming prey.

Humans can also suffer from too much light and the wrong light. The American Medical Association

last year issued a report warning that blue-rich LED streetlights operate at wavelengths that adversely suppress melatonin at night. Too-bright residential lighting is associated with reduced sleep times, dissatisfaction with sleep quality, excessive sleepiness, impaired daytime function, and obesity. The AMA-recommended street lighting should have a color temperature of no greater than 3,000 K. For reference, an incandescent bulb has 2,400 K, mean-

COLORS BY NUMBER

The Kelvin temperature scale assigns a numerical value to the color of a light source.



SOURCE: COMPLETE FACILITIES SUPPLY



Blue wavelengths from the sun are beneficial during the day, but blue light at night may cause health problems.

MODEL LIGHTING ORDINANCE

The International Dark-Sky Association and the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America offer a model ordinance and standards communities can use to reduce glare, light trespass, and skylight.

EXPLORE

darksky.org/our-work/public-policy/mlo

WEB

ing it contains far less blue and far more yellow and red wavelengths.

Peter Strasser, technical director at the International Dark-Sky Association, describes it as still a fledgling technology. Most existing lighting regulations never anticipated LEDs. He describes development and adoption of regulations as moving "at the speed of government" while the adoption of the new technology is proceeding "blazingly fast."

Manufacturers overemphasized the cost and energy benefits of LEDs, Strasser charges. "They were really dangling carrots in front of communities, saying the chips (in LEDs) lasted 100,000 hours. That's 20 years of not having to service the products," he says. LEDs can last a long time, but not nearly so long: evidence is coming in at six to eight years, he says. Further, the effectiveness of the lights depends on their cleanliness. LEDs must be wiped occasionally to remove grime. LEDs still deliver a big bang, but not quite so much as advertised.

Tucson, where the Dark-Sky Association is based, has had lighting ordinances since 1972. The amount of illumination is limited, and importantly, lights must also be directed downward, to where the light can be used. It's foolish, says Strasser, to point lights upward to illuminate the bellies of passing airplanes. The upshot of these regulations in Tucson, says Strasser, is that he can still see the Milky Way from the driveway of his home eight miles from a city center of one million people.

Stars and planets aside, says John Barentine, the Dark-Sky Association's program manager, the bottom line for planners and elected officials is what's good for dark skies also saves money, by making sure light is used most efficiently—including the most effective ways to improve public safety. More lighting is not always the answer. In fact, additional public lighting often has an inverse relationship with public safety, say dark-sky advocates.

Bob Parks, the director of a Virginia-based non-profit called the Smart Outdoor Lighting Alliance, says the fallacy of increased lighting is demonstrated by metropolitan Washington D.C., where he lives. The city has straight edges, dating to the original founding in the late 18th century. Those borders are well defined by the night lights photographed from 249 miles in space by the International Space Station commander Scott Kelly early this year.

Washington is lit more brightly, as satellite images show. One reason, says Parks, is because many policy makers believe that lighting deters crime. A study he commissioned several years ago, when he

was still with the International Dark-Sky Association, found no correlation.

"We found that with few exceptions the DC side had similar or higher overall crime than Maryland or Virginia and two to three times the average lighting levels," he says. The study was abandoned before being published because funding was withdrawn, says Parks, so he can point to no numbers for examination.

Evidence about the value of lighting in deterring crime is surprisingly thin. A 2007 review of studies prepared for the Swedish Council for Crime Prevention found mixed results in eight American studies. Four of the studies found that improved street lighting was effective in reducing crime, while the other four found no effect, according to the report, "Improved Street Lighting and Crime Prevention." Five studies from the United Kingdom, however, were clear that improved lighting led to decreases in crime. What may matter most, however, is the perception that improved lighting reduces crime.

A different kind of preservation

In Flagstaff (pop. 68,000), four hours north of Tucson, dimmed lights are part of the culture, even on the old Route 66. Recent images comparing cities of about the same size show that Cheyenne, Wyoming, is nearly 14 times brighter than Flagstaff. Flagstaff is divided into zones, with maximum lumens per acre in each zone. Some areas must have fully shielded fixtures, and others just partially shielded fixtures. There are also classes of light. An informed citizenry, including astronomers, is on board.

"Once you start pushing the envelope, people start getting it," says Brian Kulina, AICP, zoning code manager for Flagstaff. "It's my experience that our lighting standards are pretty well set in stone. None of our planners here negotiate. Either you hit it [the standard] or you don't."

Businesses will arrive, informing the city that they have certain standards, such as for canopies on chain gas stations. Flagstaff tells them to comply with the regulations. A developer arrived recently with a proposal for 1,300 houses—and agreed to create more restrictive standards than the city's standards for that area, near the Naval Observatory.

In Massachusetts, Cambridge has other concerns. It's a city of just over 100,000 people, and officials want to balance needs of the many users in mixed use developments: ground-floor merchants, upper-floor residents, maybe a life sciences company next door. An outdoor lighting task force met 18



Camping under the stars in Utah's Canyonlands National Park, an International Dark Sky Park, is a rare experience. The park's goal is to make visitors and neighbors aware of its fragile night sky.

times over two years to forge regulations. The goal, says Lisa Hemmerle, director of economic development, was to create requirements that developers can pass to the electricians they contract with.

If you examine a satellite photograph of the U.S. taken at night, the coasts and the more densely populated East are heavily lighted. Lights dim at the Great Plains. "The East will only get lighter over time, but that just underscores the need to preserve the few places with dark skies," says Barentine. "And they are vanishing rapidly."

Greater hope remains in the more thinly settled West, and there are already many dark-sky designations associated with national parks.

In Idaho, there's ambition for something more: the first dark-sky reserve in the U.S. and the 12th in the world recognized by the International Dark-Sky Association. The Idaho Conservation League is pushing for the designation in the Sun Valley-Ketchum area, which has wilderness on three sides. The towns adopted lighting regulations in the late 1990s but do not necessarily enforce them.

In Utah, Janet Muir retired to the mountain town of Eden after a career in New York City. Eden is on the shadowy side of the Wasatch Range, away from the lights of Ogden. She works to protect the dark sky of her mountain valley. "Your nightscape is

a very big part of placemaking," she says.

Muir is cofounder of the University of Utah's recently formed Consortium for Dark Sky Studies. It is described as the first academic center in the world dedicated to discovering, developing, communicating, and applying knowledge pertaining to the quality of night skies.

Stephen Goldsmith, who was the director of planning in Salt Lake City when the Olympics were held there in 2002, is now associate professor of city and metropolitan planning at the university. He grew up in Salt Lake City just a few blocks away from the university, and it was a different place then. As a boy, he could see the Milky Way from his backyard.

"I would just fall asleep staring at the sky and I remember seeing the Milky Way and thinking, 'What is that?'" he says. That sense of wonder gave him a grounding that he says is lost when the night sky is obscured. Restoring the night sky—harnessing our energy flows that have hidden the stars—is a vital task in making cities more livable, he thinks. To see the stars, he says, is to feel like a speck of dust on earth, itself a speck of dust in the cosmos. He finds that comforting. It keeps a lot of other stressful questions in perspective. ■

Allen Best writes about energy and other topics from his home base in the Denver area. He is a frequent contributor to *Planning*.

LIVING UNDER SKYGLOW

A recent study (advances.sciencedirect.org/content/2/6/e1600377) finds that 80 percent of the world's population lives under a light-polluted sky. It's even worse in the U.S. and Europe, where 99 percent of residents experience nighttime skyglow.

To see how bad light pollution is in your area, download the New World Atlas of Artificial Sky Brightness from the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences.

EXPLORE

cires.colorado.edu/artificial-sky

WEB

A

DECADE AGO, Houston's Near Northside neighborhood was largely unknown to Houstonians living beyond its borders. That shouldn't have been the case; the 2.5-square-mile neighborhood is a historic part of the city, dating to the late 1800s, that borders downtown. Once predominantly Italian and German, today the community is around 80 percent Hispanic and 33 percent of residents live below the poverty level. It was often overlooked.

"We didn't have a voice," says Gwyn Guidy, a longtime resident who serves on the board of the Lindale Park Civic Club in the northern portion of the community. Back then, the area's Super Neighborhood—the city-sanctioned neighborhood body—was defunct. Many civic clubs had become inactive. And the area carried little sway with local leaders.

"We didn't even have a place to have community meetings. We were just a nonentity. That's the best way to put it," Guidy says.

Today, political advocacy and voter turnout is surging. Community organizations have retooled their services with a laser-like focus on improving economic opportunity. And a new light-rail line running through the spine of the community is reconnecting the area to the rest of the city. "Today," Guidy says, "We're movers and shakers."

That change is due, in part, to the neighborhood's commitment to its "Quality of Life Agreement," which was awarded the APA's 2017 Advancing Diversity and Social Change Excellence Award in Honor of Paul Davidoff. The award highlights a plan that empowers minority communities through advocacy, a core tenet of the Near Northside agreement. The plan focuses on expanding Near Northside's advocacy capacity while improving safety, housing, and economic opportunities. The nonprofit Avenue CDC, a developer of affordable homes in the area, and Houston LISC, a nonprofit community development financial institution, coordinated the effort. The Community Design Resource Center at the University of Houston's architecture school served as a planning consultant.

It started in 2009 with a process that involved input from more than 230 community stakeholders. "They call it an agreement, not a plan, so everyone knows there are action items on it that they're responsible for," says Susan Rogers, who directs the Community Design Resource Center.

The first agreement was published in 2010. Five years later, the community decided it was time for an update. By then, each of the 11 projects in the first plan—including a new charter school, a community center, and trail improvements—had materialized. The community saw \$53 million in investment from 2010 to 2014, including \$30 million in new and renovated housing.

The 2015 update celebrated those successes but addresses new challenges. For example, one of the priorities of the 2015 agreement was the need for children to have safe places to go after school. Another theme was the importance of economic opportunities, especially for young people.

Empowering residents

Meetings and presentations for the 2015 QLA in the heavily Latino area were conducted in both English and Spanish. The pages of agreement itself alternate between the two languages. The goal was to find ways for the community to achieve its vision on its own, not to rely on outsiders to shape its destiny. The process was driven by stakeholders organized into 10 "GO Teams" covering topics such as advocacy, education, and economic development, among others, that worked to develop visions and goals for the Near Northside.

"We have to get beyond this idea that it takes new people with wealth to transform a neighborhood," Rogers says. "The notion that it takes white residents to bring in economic development—that needs to change."

For example, at the Wesley Community Cen-



Volunteers repair a senior's home in 2015 as part of the partnership between Near Northside GO Neighborhoods, Rebuilding Together Houston, and Avenue CDC.

PHOTO COURTESY
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

planning.org/awards/2017/nearnorthsideqla

STAT SHOT • Between 2010 and 2015, \$53 million was leveraged or invested in the neighborhood to support 175 new initiatives and construct 254 new homes and apartments • 12,000 volunteers contributed 33,000 hours to support QLA work • 264 partner organizations and agencies joined the community in the effort



ter, in the heart of community, officials used the process to reevaluate their after-school programming, which wasn't well attended. It launched programs housed within the schools themselves, which made it easier to reach students.

"The question is, how can we keep these individuals engaged in school so they can graduate and then get into workforce development?" asks Prentiss Collins, the center's director of operations and community development.

One of the challenges Near Northside faces is how to preserve its character. Proximity to downtown and the new light-rail line make it a popular destination for newcomers, and residents and activists worry about the tall town houses that are

rising among the neighborhoods of bungalows.

Many are concerned those changes could price longtime residents out of the community. In an area where median income is about 30 percent below the citywide average, median home prices increased from \$49,500 in 2010 to \$80,000 in 2014, according to Houston Association of Realtors data cited by the *Houston Chronicle*.

The Quality of Life Agreement encourages residents to preserve their area; residents have successfully protected roughly a third of the area's lots through a process that limits developers' ability to reduce lot sizes, which in turn prevents town house development on those plots.

"Over time, [residents have] developed civic muscle and have been able to take on bigger and bigger issues," says Jennifer Wagley, deputy director of Avenue CDC. Examples include successful campaigns for school resources, new bike-share stations, and a historical district designation. Another sign of success (and increased political clout): Prominent politicians have started visiting.

Next steps

Despite those recent wins, work remains. In 2016, 11-year-old Josue Flores was murdered in the neighborhood after reportedly walking home from his middle school's end-of-year Science Club party. Community activists blamed the death, in part, on city leaders' failure to adequately address a surge in homeless people in area (Flores's accused killer was an ex-Marine receiving assistance at a Salvation Army facility in the community).

Nevertheless, residents and organizers remain undeterred, and they believe the Quality of Life Agreement process should be replicated across the city. Near Northside was one of the first two Houston neighborhoods to go through the process.

"That's the secret of its success," Guidry says. "It's about offering people an outline but allowing them to direct their own future." ■

—Ryan Holeywell

Holeywell is the communications manager at Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research. He previously worked as a reporter for the *Houston Chronicle* and *Governing*.

Regulating Short-Term Rentals

IT HAS BEEN LESS THAN A DECADE since short-term rentals came onto the municipal scene, but the impacts of allowing them have reverberated through cities nationwide.

At face value, STRs look like a win-win-win. Hosts can use the rental income to pay down mortgages, pay their property taxes, and improve their quality of life; guests get a nice room, often for a lower price than a hotel, and chambers of commerce cite increased tourism's positive effect on the local economy.

But it's more complicated than that, particularly for planning departments and elected officials, who are responsible for code compliance, land-use and zoning conflicts, and budgetary concerns associated with enforcement and taxes. (See "Could You BnB My Neighbor?": planning.org/planning/2016/feb/bnb.htm).

Finding middle ground

While some cities are trying to prohibit STRs, for most there is simply too much voter pressure to ban them outright. The boldest reaction has been from New York City, which uses state law prohibiting advertising to outlaw STRs, but the room rental differentials between hotels and private residences make evasion very tempting.

More recently the conversation has turned to how the various interests may be accommodated. Cities have a few options when looking to effectively—and legally—regulate short-term rentals.

LICENSING. Requiring STRs to be licensed, and establishing a process for the withdrawal of that licensing, not only allows the city to track STRs and collect regulatory fees to operate the program, but also makes enforcement of zoning, city codes, and reporting—possibly the biggest challenge cities face—easier.

In order to ensure the success of a licensing program, it is essential that online purveyors like Airbnb and VRBO report local STR activities to the city. This can be difficult because the company is not physically located in the city (and perhaps not even the state).

Larger cities like San Francisco and Vancouver, B.C. have litigated the issue and have either come to an agreement with purveyors for reporting and cooperation or are moving in that direction. Options for smaller cities include providing uniformity through state legislation (as is proposed in Oregon) or using the precedent established in litigation efforts of larger cities.

FEES. STRs often do not pay city taxes and fees like their hotel and bed-and-breakfast counterparts. This can be problematic because those fees are often used to support the local tourism

industry or raise revenue for the city. One solution is for the online purveyor to report rentals and include (and collect) city fees as part of the rental. This has been accomplished more often as part of settlement agreements following litigation. However, both online purveyors and home owners typically seek to avoid this obligation.

LAND-USE CONTROL. Renting out rooms in a residential zone essentially allows commercial use in an area that prohibits that type of use. It is up to the city whether to ignore the zoning inconsistency, prosecute the landowner, or amend regulations to allow the use, perhaps with uniform limitations. Some municipalities allow one or two rooms to be rented but require the owner to notify neighbors and the neighborhood association; prohibit STRs unless they are within an owner-occupied dwelling; or require that STRs be accompanied by a conditional use or special exception, zone change, or design review. Cities may also place limitations on the number of STRs within a certain radius.

STRUCTURAL, FIRE, AND LIFE SAFETY CODES. A municipality must decide whether it will allow STRs in residential dwellings with or without compliance with these codes, which are often different from those for hotels and B&Bs. Cities may not want to impose upgrade costs on home owners who rent out rooms, but that may change if a fatal fire or structural failure occurs. Many cities have ignored full compliance, while others have taken a selective approach. Portland, Oregon, requires a minimal inspection to resolve more apparent problems, but none of the cities that allow short term rentals currently require upgrades to hotel standards.

INSURANCE. Requiring insurance that guards the host (and sometimes the city) against liability for bodily injury or property loss is another issue best decided at the outset. If a guest slips and falls at the rental site or is attacked by the host or the host's dog, the guest should have some resort for injuries. More importantly, that resort should not ordinarily be the city.

Each of these regulatory approaches is legally recognized, but before planners can act, they and city attorneys must ensure that the city has home rule or statutory authority to regulate. The city must then determine whether it wishes to regulate and, if so, under what circumstances it will undertake that activity.

If properly done, short-term rental guests and hosts can find each other, the online purveyors can thrive, and the city can ensure the health and safety of guests and will have a revenue stream to cover costs and raise revenues for tourism or general city purposes.

—Edward Sullivan

Sullivan is a retired attorney who teaches, writes, and speaks on land-use law matters. He is also a member of APA's Amicus Curiae and Legislative and Policy Committees.

The ones that were available during the incident described where water was likely to flow if the dam had a catastrophic failure—but the main dam was never at risk. They did not have an inundation map to describe the spillway scenario they were facing.

"We've learned and now we're planning to have different levels of inundation mapping done," says Matt Murray, the liaison

officer for the California Department of Water Resources. "We can't just plan for the worst-case scenario. We need to plan for some of the middle ground too."

And they should be better prepared for future emergencies because of some of the partnerships formed during the incident. Rust says several agencies that didn't communicate on a regular basis before the spillway emergency now work with each

other on a regular basis.

"One of the silver linings is how partnerships are going to be built . . . on the potential tragedy that could have occurred but didn't," Rust says. "[It will help us] make better decisions for the future." ■

—Kristen Pope

Pope is a freelance writer and editor in Jackson, Wyoming.

Shipping-Container Homes Pose Zoning Challenges for Municipalities

SHIPPING-CONTAINER HOMES are frequently touted as low-cost and eco-friendly alternatives to traditional construction. But as the concept has slowly expanded beyond novelty use—for remote beach homes and art installations, for example—and into housing, municipalities are grappling with where this new form of construction should fall within building and zoning regulations.

St. Charles, Missouri—a St. Louis suburb of about 69,000 residents—faced just such a challenge last summer. When resident Zack Smithey, an artist, applied for a building permit for a 3,100-square-foot home to be made of eight 40-foot shipping containers, neighbors objected and city council members expressed deep reservations.

"We have an obligation to existing home owners to make sure that buildings in the area are consistent and don't hurt property values," says council member Dave Beckering.

But the St. Charles planning and zoning commission found itself at a loss. "We didn't have anything in our building code to prevent it, so we had to [grant] a permit," says Bruce Evans, AICP, the director of community development. "It caused us to take a hard look at our zoning."

Covering new ground

Following the issuing of the permit, the St. Charles city council considered a bill that would have restricted all future ship-



Zach Smithey's shipping-container home may still be a work in progress, but it sparked the city council of St. Charles, Missouri, to rule definitively on how future structures will be zoned.

ping-container homes to areas zoned for modular and mobile homes. The bill was unanimously rejected by the planning and zoning commission, who said the restriction would limit architectural creativity and was an unnecessary regulation against a construction method that had not yet been deemed inappropriate. The city council subsequently voted down the bill.

In researching alternatives, Evans enlisted the American Planning Association's Planning Advisory Service for help finding existing ordinances. "There's not much out there," Evans says, "so we came up with what works for St. Charles."

In December, the city council passed an ordinance requiring shipping container homes planned for residential areas to meet three conditions to receive a conditional use permit: 1) It complies with the building code; 2) the structure

will be completely enclosed with siding; and 3) it will have a pitched wood or metal roof. In areas zoned for mobile or modular homes, shipping container homes will be a permitted use, with no conditions.

"I think it's a good compromise," Evans says. "The conditional-use process gives the planning and zoning commission and city council more options to place appropriate conditions on a project. It notifies neighbors and gives them a say in the process. We recognize this is a trend in the country; we may well have more individuals who want this kind of home. This ordinance allows us to say, 'Before you go forward, we want you to do a few things to protect city aesthetics.' ■

—Kristin Baird Rattini

Baird Rattini is a St. Louis-based freelance writer who has contributed to such national publications as *National Geographic*, *People*, and *American Way*.